







W Maddox pinx<sup>t</sup>

JW Cook Sculp<sup>t</sup>

الْعِدْلُ الْفَقِي  
حَبِيبُ رِزْقِ اللَّهِ

افندي

Yours faithfully

Risk Allah

# THE THISTLE

AND

# THE CEDAR OF LEBANON,

BY

HABEEB RISK ALLAH EFFENDI,

M.R.C.S.,

AND ASSOCIATE OF KING'S COLLEGE.

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“And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle that was in Lebanon, sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife; and there passed a wild beast that was in Lebanon and trode down the thistle.”  
2 Kings, xiv. 9.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE following pages were written in compliance with the solicitations of many esteemed friends, who were desirous that I should lay before the public an outline of my life and travels, and give to the English nation a description of the domestic habits and religious opinions of my countrymen in Syria. However incompetent I may have proved for the task, I trust that what I have written may not be wholly uninteresting; and, above all, it is my earnest hope, that my feeble efforts to arouse the generous interest of the English for the welfare and improvement of my native land, may not prove without use.

In choosing the title which is prefixed to my humble work, I have acted upon the long-established usage of my countrymen of speaking parabolically, a practice which has existed from the days of Job down to the present time.

Those at all acquainted with the subject will feel the difficulties I had to encounter in adapting Oriental words to English orthography. After mature deliberation, I have endeavoured to carry out the system

used by Professor Johnson in his learned Oriental and English dictionary, and which, I believe, is the one now adopted by all the eminent scholars of Europe.

I cannot conclude without offering my heartfelt thanks to my friend, the Rev. Wm. Frederick Witts, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, for the valuable assistance he has rendered me in revising these pages for the press.

R. A.

18, *Cambridge-square, Hyde Park,*  
*May, 1853.*

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About  $\frac{1}{4}$  of what is  
printed here is  
wrong. If you  
wish to learn about  
Lebanon never  
THE THISTLE AND THE CEDAR

## OF LEBANON.

depend on this  
book

### INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

IN presenting the British public with the following pages, containing a brief sketch of my life and travels, together with a description of the customs and present condition of my native land, I am actuated solely by motives which, I trust, a careful perusal of this work will prove to be disinterested.

All nations are more or less patriotic; none more so than the inhabitants of the British isles. With them the inducements to this love of home are all-sufficient, for their religion is the purest, their government and laws the best in the world, and they are second to no people in the enjoyment of privileges and blessings, such as could be only enjoyed by a "peculiar people," under the immediate protection of the Almighty Benefactor. Next to them we may rank, as promoters of freedom and enlightenment, the citizens of the United States, those other scions of a noble stock.

Yet so peculiar is that innate love of man for the particular country and people with which are associated the early years of his childhood, that even the son of

utter darkness, born and bred a savage, inured to every hardship and privation, who boasts of no city, scarcely professes a religion, whose home is the desert waste, his bed the warm sands of Arabia, even he, the wild Bedouin, in his untutored heart, sets boundless store by the place and people to which early attachment has riveted his affections. Separate him from these and from his beloved mare, and no riches or pleasures could compensate him for the loss. This is also applicable to the humble and oftentimes oppressed natives who dwell in the towns and villages of Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. Though for centuries they have been subjected to the heavy yoke of bondage, and of late years, like the Israelites of old, were bondsmen to Egypt; however much they may have deplored their hard fate, none have ever dreamt of quitting the dear land of their forefathers—those ancestors who were coeval with the patriarchs. Some till the ground where Abraham once tended his flocks; others cut timber where the men of Hiram and Solomon once hewed cedars for the temple at Jerusalem; but the boast and glory of all these is, that they dwell in the land where the Promise was fulfilled. One may be by birth a Nazarene, another a townsman of Cana. A day or two's journey, at the furthest a week or ten days, enables him to reach that very Bethlehem where the blessed Redeemer was born, to track His holy footsteps in His pilgrimage of mercy from place to place, to weep and bemoan Him on the site of the last closing scenes of His holy life, and to raise up their hearts with grateful thanksgivings for the great salvation wrought out for their souls by His glorious resurrection.

Apart from these cherished associations of the spiritual with the temporal world, the native of the Holy



Land is fondly attached to his country, because its climate is congenial to his manners, its soil productive, its inhabitants hospitable, its waters the purest, air the freshest, sun the brightest, fruits the most delicious, and flowers the sweetest and most wildly profuse. All these gifts in the greatest luxuriance are to be found within the Lebanon range—that Lebanon of which the inspired bard, the wisest of men and the best of kings, sings in his beautiful metaphor on Christian love.\* “Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits . . . . A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.”

With such a past to dwell on, it is not surprising that the poor, neglected peasant of Syria may still proudly vaunt himself of his birthright and country. I, too, hope, kind reader, for your sympathy in my sharing this national characteristic, and for endeavouring, as far as in me lies, to promote the welfare, both temporal and eternal, of my fellow countrymen and native land. The former, alas! are gradually sinking deeper and deeper into the meshes of superstition and idolatry; the latter groans under a heavy yoke, rendered still less supportable by the grossest ignorance. The indefatigable propagators of the Romish faith are awakening the people from their pristine simplicity, only, I fear, to plunge them into a more fearful vortex of errors.

I rush to the rescue; for God has blessed me far above my countrymen, by shedding the true light of the Gospel around my pathway, through the instrumentality of good and holy men, whom He has chosen for His especial service, and who have bestowed on me

\* Canticles, iv. 13—15.

the priceless boon of a Christian education. I am willing and anxious to devote every hour of my life, and all my poor means, to the furtherance of His cause. Yet, though much may combine in my favour, I am inadequate to the accomplishment of the good I desire for my country, without the aid, wise counsel, and support of the Christian inhabitants of Great Britain.

Christian reader! in the following pages I have endeavoured to depict as clearly as I can the evil and the remedy. I have glanced over the leading features of my life, to show how circumstances, trivial in themselves, appear to have combined in my favour, that I should be an humble instrument in the hands of my Maker, to work out a brighter and better hope for dear Syria.

That "pearl of great price," pure Christianity, has been cherished and nurtured within these isles till the true faith has reared itself up like a mighty mirror, reflecting the glorious light of the blessed truths of the Gospel far and wide. May one beam of charity, reflected from thence, alight upon the mother church of Syria—that church now sunk in misery and degradation, but from which (remember, O Christian of Great Britain) was derived the glorious knowledge of an eternal salvation.

"The Thistle that *is* in Lebanon" is the harassed, weak, yet simple disciple of the Eastern Church; and "the Cedar that *was* in Lebanon" is the true Church of Christ, whose seeds were first derived from those Holy shores, and are now firmly rooted in England. The Thistle has sent to ask thy daughter, Enlightenment, in marriage to her son, Simplicity. O refuse her not! lest the *wild beast* in Lebanon should tread down the Thistle and obtain the ascendancy.

## CHAPTER I.

## SCENES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

My earliest recollections are associated with the lovely and rural village of Shuwei-fât, my birth-place, on the Lebanon; and where, if not the happiest, certainly the most innocent years of my childhood were passed. My father had no fixed residence at that place, but he, with the rest of his family, usually resorted there to spend the summer months and part of the autumn and spring. In winter the cold became intense, owing to the elevated position of the village; consequently most of its inhabitants and summer visitors, including amongst these latter my own family, invariably wintered at Beyrout. My uncle, Sheikh Faris Biridi, filled the important and respected post of *katib*, or secretary to the Emir Beshir Shahab, the prince of Lebanon, who resided at the village of Dayr-al Kamar, situated a few hours' journey from Shuwei-fât. At least three times a week my uncle's duties compelled him to visit the Emir. Sheikh Faris was universally respected amongst the villagers; and the best proof of this is the fact of his being Sheikh, or Chief Man of his village; his house was the best—his grounds the most extensive, and he himself in reality, an intelligent and well-informed man. For a Syrian, he was deeply read and

well skilled in the use of his pen ; but above all, he was an earnest and devout Christian, a kind father and a good friend—virtues which gained for him the esteem and love of all the neighbouring villagers, as well Moslems and Druses as the Christians.

Under the favourable auspices of this kind man's tuition, I first learnt to read and write my native tongue ; and, as I was afterwards informed, even at that early age, gave cheering proofs of an active mind, and evinced an aptitude and love for the acquirement of knowledge, although then barely four years of age. I could not possibly have had a better guide, both as regards precept and example. So long as I remained under his hospitable roof, his great and chief care was to richly stock my young mind with doctrines well adapted to promote the welfare of the soul in after years on all important business. His household arrangements were an example for others. He was an early riser himself, and insisted on all his household following this healthful custom : his maxim was that sleep was for the dark hours of the night—work and recreation for the light—prayers and thanksgivings for all seasons.

My uncle was accustomed when at home to repair every morning, during the spring and summer seasons, to the top of a neighbouring hill, which commanded a view over an extensive range of country. On these occasions, it was my wont to accompany him. A servant preceded us carrying a small carpet and a cushion or two ; I carried my uncle's pipe and tobacco-pouch in one hand ; in the other, the Kitab Mukaddas, or Arabic Bible, printed in England by the Church Missionary Society. As soon as my uncle had seated himself, and assumed his pipe, he would make me sit at his feet and read out to him from the good Book, illustrating and commenting

as opportunity occurred. The hundred and fourth Psalm, than which none could be better suited to the time and place, was usually his favourite.

From our elevated position, we could command a view, not only of our own dearly cherished and beautiful hamlet, but also of many of the surrounding villages. At our feet lay Shuwei-fât, with its neat little cottages and cleanly swept court-yards, surrounded by a dense little forest of mulberries, oranges, lemons, apricots, olives, countless vines, and many other fruits; the dark leaves of an occasional poplar lending variety to the beauty and shading of the foliage. Not a man, woman or child, moved to and fro in the narrow little streets, but their names and occupations were well known to us. The dogs wagged their tails in happy recognition of my shrill sharp whistle, and a thousand echoes caught up the signal. The verdant hills and valleys that surrounded us were thickly dotted with cattle and sheep contentedly browsing upon the rich pasturage. Peeping over the densely wooded plantations, the tops of the little white-washed houses pointed out the locality of some well-known village. Clear streams of water sparkling in the glowing sunlight, often intersected the plains and valleys, or rushed headlong down the steep sides of some deep dell, abounding with wild flowers and myrtle bushes. Far below, were the distant fields in square patches of variegated hues, green bespangled with blue and crimson flowers; sometimes covered, like a sheet of pure gold, with countless buttercups, and sometimes in uncultivated patches of sombre brown; but what I most dearly loved to gaze at was the broad blue sea in the distance, looking so pleasantly cool and calm, with here and there a patch of deeper blue, where the breeze sportively ruffled the



waves. I always thought of Nabiy Yunas\* and the great fish, and wondered if many such fish were yet taking their pastime in the deep. How little I imagined at that time that I was destined to traverse those mighty waters, and to suffer myself to be borne away on their waves hundreds of miles from shore, exposed to raging tempests in a fragile bark! Such a notion would then have been scouted by all my friends; and I myself should have been foremost in deriding the idea, and in opposing, that which has since proved conducive to my best interests, temporal, and I trust eternal; but I was then a child, and understood and acted as a child.

From this pleasant spot, my uncle gazed with rapture upon the surrounding scenery, as the first rays of the sun peered above the snow-capped peaks of lofty Lebanon, and spread a golden mantle over the vast panorama; from my childhood, I have known how to appreciate the beauties of nature in all their poetry; and I admire them still, but with a milder and more subdued admiration.

“He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.” This was a portion of a morning’s reading lesson; the force and beauty of the verse were illustrated by everything around me. My worthy preceptor would impress this fact upon my mind. The men, the cattle, the trees, shrubs, flowers, birds, butterflies, even the most insignificant insect that crawls upon the earth—all these are preserved, he argued, by the bounty and beneficence of the Creator—without this water how would nature subsist? In short, the whole of that delightful Psalm seemed as though expressly composed to illustrate the country around us, especially

\* The supposed tomb of the prophet Jonah is distinctly visible from this spot.

that passage which says, "The Cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted; where the birds make their nests."

Thus profitably and pleasantly the early hours of the day would be consumed. I was then dismissed with sage advice to remember throughout the day what I had read and heard—and my uncle being called away by his numerous avocations, I was left to amuse myself with my play-mates in the village until the hour of noon summoned us to our substantial mid-day meal. Like most boys, we were prone to mischief. I remember a favorite game amongst the village lads, which occasionally terminated in a squabble, and was known by the name of *Al Cadi* or *The Judge*. The *Cadi* was chosen by lot, as were the officers of his court, and the imaginary plaintiffs and defendants. Squatted on the ground under the pleasant shade of some mulberry-tree, we then held a court. Sentence was recorded and executed; and sometimes the boy who personated the imaginary criminal was sentenced to be bastinadoed. On these occasions the executioners laid about them so smartly with the light switches of the mulberry and olive, that though the boy's shoes were never removed the lash penetrated to the sole of the foot, and then the pretended culprit, smarting from pain, would lose all command over his temper; a *melée* would ensue, which outraged the dignity of the court, and usually terminated by all the members, the *Cadi* included, being summarily whipped for their naughtiness.

When the hour of mid-day was announced by the striking of gongs, which in Syria are usually substituted for bells at the churches, all our family assembled for *futar*, and my uncle would enter, followed by the peasants employed about his plantations, together with his other



servants. This was the signal for the cook and her assistant to carry into the centre of the yard a large iron cauldron containing the *ruzz-mufalfal*, or whatever was prepared for the day for the supply of the whole household. Clean shining platters were ranged in piles round this cauldron, and a blessing having been first asked, the food was ladled out—a goodly portion for each—enough and no waste. The only distinguishing mark at this family meal was, that the members of my uncle’s family were all seated round a low circular table, and reclined upon carpets and against cushions. The others sat where their fancy dictated; but they chiefly crowded under that side of the court-yard wall which afforded a shade from the heat of the sun. In addition to the contents of the cauldron, there was generally a dish of stewed meat and vegetables; or, (if the season was Lent,) of the egg-vegetable, or *batinjan*, sliced and fried in oil—with as many cucumbers, pickles, lettuces, radishes, young onions, and chillies, as any one wished and asked for. During the repast, one of the servants usually stood at the door to watch for any poor wayfarers who might pass, to ask them to partake of our hospitality. When all had finished, the fragments were divided into equal portions amongst the cats and dogs of the establishment; and what was left by them was given to the fowls and sparrows. Our evening meal differed but little from that of the morning, except on days when the national dish of *Kubba*\* superseded everything else. Then we had Kubbas in soup made

\* This favorite dish is something similar to forced-meat balls, being made of dried boiled wheat, finely-chopped suet and meat, pepper, salt, and red chillies. The whole is mashed into a paste, then squeezed by the hand into a globular shape, and afterwards either boiled or baked.

of *laban* or curdled milk, and Kubbas fried, and Kubbas baked; for the Syrian can never tire of eating of this delicious dish. The interval between mid-day and the evening was occupied variously—but first came the indispensable siesta, indulged in by men, women, and children. The men would then return to their respective labours, while the women occupied themselves in household matters, and most of the children were sent to the village school; but for myself my afternoons were occupied with our family spiritual adviser, an excellent old man who came daily and instructed me at home, from the hours of two to four P.M. After supper, my uncle would sit in state and receive the visits of the neighbours who usually dropped in for an hour or two every evening. They sat and smoked, and talked about agricultural matters or village affairs; and sometimes one of the party would tell an amusing story, and another would sing a song—sweetmeats, coffee, and other refreshments being from time to time handed round—and thus the evenings would be spent in pleasant harmless enjoyment. This, with very little variety, is a faithful picture of what was our every-day life at Shuwei-fât: and so passed the years of my infancy.

I have omitted to make any personal allusion to the various members of my family. I hope, however, that I shall be pardoned in making a slight reference to my uncle's lovely daughters, nine in number; these fair cousins of mine outrivalled each other in beauty and amiable qualities, and each had a trait of beauty peculiar to herself. In Syria, it is the custom to distinguish the various members of a family by a soubriquet, which has reference to some perfection or failing. Thus our groom, Yusuf, who limped a little, was called *Topal* or the lame; and one of my cousins, *Al Shams*, or the sun,

owing to her very bright eyes; whilst another, who had mild blue eyes, was designated "*Al Kamar*" or the moon. *Al Kamar* was so noted for her beauty and sweet disposition, that two of the princes of Lebanon sought her hand in marriage—and this, though they had never seen her; but *Al Kamar* was not ambitious of honors and riches. The creed of the princes also differed widely from her own; so she refused them both. All these nine daughters are now married and settled in life; so I take leave of them with a fervent prayer that the Almighty may graciously watch over them, and crown their end with eternal happiness.

Shuwei-fât, like most of the surrounding villages, produces a large quantity of silk; but it is in particular celebrated for the excellence of its wine, its olives, and olive-oil. Of the first, I can affirm, that I have, in after-years, heard good judges of wine, when quoting its excellence, refer to it as verifying the words of Hosea (xiv. 7), "The scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon." It is certainly very odoriferous. The olives and olive-oil are not to be surpassed in all Syria.

The inhabitants, both men and women, are a fine, healthy people and the males are particularly athletic. To describe them well, I cannot use better or more appropriate language than that of the prophet Ezekiel (xxxi. 3)—"Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of a high stature."

Yet with all these combined advantages, of health, a delicious climate, and a fertile soil, many of the poor peasants are oppressed and miserable. This arises from the iniquitous system of extortion practised on them by land-owners and subordinate officers. It must, however,

be confessed, that the mountaineers are, to a certain extent, more independent than the inhabitants of the plains, who are ridden over roughshod by the petty and tyrannical under-strappers in office.

I had barely attained my tenth year, when, much to my grief, I was removed from the family of my kind uncle, and taken to Beyrout, there permanently to reside; but, alas for short-sighted mortals, an event was even then brewing, which burst like a tempest, over the Beyroutines, and which materially affected my father's plans and wishes with regard to my future career in life.

## CHAPTER II.

## PIRATICAL ATTACK ON BEYROUT.

MONTHS rolled on. Merchants were at that period carrying on a comparatively thriving trade at Beyrout. The novelty of the scene that presented itself on my first arrival there had gradually worn off. In my leisure hours I rambled along the sandy beach, gathering shells, and wading ankle deep into the surf, at first with ill-suppressed fear and trembling; but the example of other boys emboldening me to venture into the water, I finished by becoming quite an adept in the art of swimming. Then the ships were a source of wonder and surprise, as they sailed in and out of the harbour, like gigantic swans floating over the waves. These also had ceased to excite interest, for I had been on board, handled the tarry ropes, walked the deck, and suffered inconvenience from the disagreeable motion, so that these also had ceased to be a marvel. Thus time rolled on, and I had well nigh forgotten all my regrets at leaving Lebanon and the hospitable abode of my uncle, when the unexpected event alluded to in the foregoing chapter, transpired.

It was on Palm Sunday, in, I think, the year 1827. The harbour had been deserted for some few days; there was not even an Arab boat at the anchorage: and on the eventful evening I am now describing, the eye might have vainly swept the horizon seeking for indications of an approaching sail. This, however, was no

uncommon event in those days, when the commerce of Beyrout was yet in its infancy. None imagined, on retiring to rest that night, that impending danger was so close at hand. Midnight had, however, scarcely chimed, and the last occupant of the latest open coffee-house crept home to his hovel, when a tumult arose, and the night air was filled with shrieks and lamentations, mingled with the startling reports of fire-arms. there was a rush in the streets of many people running for their lives; and all the inmates of my father's household being now thoroughly awakened, ran out also, and joined the flying multitude. The Bab Yacoob, leading to Damascus and Lebanon, was open and unguarded. We fled with the concourse towards the mountains; favored in our retreat by the obscurity of the night; nor did any think of stopping to breathe or repose till they had gained the summit of one of the neighbouring hills. Here, finding no signs of pursuit, and the clamour and report of fire-arms having died away in the distance, the frightened populace halted anxiously to await the first dawn of day which was to enable them to secure their retreat to the neighbouring villages. All were totally ignorant as to the cause of the sudden panic, but many laboured under the absurd notion that the place had been attacked by Russian troops. None, however, stopped to be better informed on the subject; but, renewing their flight with the first light of morning, each betook himself and family to that village with which he was best acquainted; and for the next few weeks the Lebanon district was inundated with the scared refugees from Beyrout.

As for ourselves, we directed our steps to Shuwei-fât,



and accomplished the journey as best we could; arriving there weary and half-famished, to the utter astonishment and dismay of my uncle's household, who were at first quite at a loss to account for our sudden appearance in so pitiable a condition. Soon after our arrival, official intelligence reached the mountains of what had transpired. A ruffianly horde of piratical Greeks, allured by the hopes of meeting with rich booty, had made this sudden descent upon the peaceful and unsuspecting inhabitants. They had entered the town without resistance, and once in possession of the Quai, had unhesitatingly commenced the work of despoliation. Whole warehouses were stripped—money and rich jewellery carried off—murder and every atrocious crime, the offspring of villany, had been perpetrated. To secure the gold coins and jewellery worn by the women on their heads, wrists, and ankles, the wretches never hesitated to make use of the knife; and earrings were wrenched forcibly from the ears of the hapless victims. When the pirates were satiated with plunder, they broke and destroyed what was left; and then, setting fire to different parts of the town, they betook themselves with their booty to their boats, and thus disappeared. Luckily for house-owners most of the buildings were constructed of solid masonry, with domes and vaulted roofs, so that the fire, even where it had ignited, speedily exhausted its impotent rage. The Moslem rabble, disguised as Greeks, also joined in the general foray.

By this calamity all the residents at Beyrout suffered more or less. Many were utterly ruined; and my poor father's losses were so severe that he at first wholly relinquished the idea of ever returning to that place.



For many months afterwards we resided at Shuwei-fât; but here also an outbreak amongst the mountaineers disturbed us again, and we were compelled to retrace our steps to Beyrout, which place, from that day forward, became my home.

With regard to the Greeks, they escaped scot-free and were neither detected nor punished.

## CHAPTER III.

## DESCRIPTION OF DAMASCUS.

It now became necessary that I should seek out and steadfastly follow up some fixed profession or calling in life. There was more than one motive that urged this measure upon me as a necessity: in the first place, my father's resources had been sadly crippled by the piratical affair; besides, I was of an age when youths in Syria earn their own livelihood, and my education was sufficiently advanced to enable me to enter upon the duties of life. I could read and write my own language, and this was all that was expected, and much more than many youths of my age could boast. I had no thought then of acquiring a knowledge of foreign languages. To escape from the thralldom of school is always a source of great delight to schoolboys.

As far as my own views went, I was bent upon going to Damascus; and though my dear parents opposed this wish at first, I gradually coaxed them into a consenting mood; and perhaps the greatest inducement for them to yield to my wishes, was the fact of our having a wealthy and influential relative, then residing at Damascus, who had been a fellow-*katib* of my uncle's, and who occupied a high post in the service of the Pasha.

To this worthy man's care I was confided; so, taking leave of my dear parents and accompanied by their blessing, I left Beyrout, and proceeded to Damascus; where, shortly after my arrival, I was fortunate enough,

through the influence of this relative, to procure a lucrative and rising situation in the Turkish service. At this place I remained a considerable time, delighted with the climate and beauty of the place, as also well pleased with my office and with my associates.

No pen can give an adequate idea of the delights of Damascus. The nearest approach I can hope to make to a truthful description, will be simply to depict what I saw and experienced; and this perhaps will give the stranger a better conception of the place than the flowery rhapsodies of many of those writers, whose experience, resulting from a visit of a few weeks, has been skilfully converted into some dozen chapters of post octavo.

Damascus, like most Eastern towns, has nothing to boast of in the outside appearance of its rough unwhite-washed houses. Its streets are narrow, dark and intricate—crowds of people—caravans of camels—mules—and troops of donkeys—are all perpetually on the move, though not with that rapidity of locomotion so striking to a foreigner on his first visit to London.

The stranger is struck dumb with amazement and disappointment. He has heard so much and he sees so little, that his first exclamation is sure to be, “Can this really be Sham-al Sharif?—the much praised Damascus;—the so-styled paradise of the East!” Yes, stranger, this is the justly celebrated Damascus; but the secret cause of your amazement lies hid as the kernel in the shell of a nut, the outer surface of which is the walls of the houses, while within lies concealed the sweet kernel. Open the street-door of rough and unpolished wood; and after carefully closing the same, as if by magic, the whole train of your thoughts and your discontentment will be diverted into another channel, and you will be struck with surprise and admiration, as the hidden beauties of

the city will then burst upon your view. The same may be said with regard to the ladies of Damascus, notoriously the handsomest women in the East—Houris, whose bright eyes have afforded an endless theme for the poet's song! Forms carefully enveloped in white and coloured *izars*—features muffled up and completely disguised by hideous black veils! That man must needs be a magician who could identify even his own wife or sister from amidst the herd of ghostly figures continually flitting to and fro in the streets; though now and then some Eastern *akruti* (coquette), may even here be found sily contriving to allow the light of her sparkling eyes to beam through this dark screen. Here also is the same mystery, and the beauty lies concealed within the outer shell.

Now standing in a spacious quadrangle, exquisitely paved with marble, we take a hasty survey of all around us. In the centre is a square basin of clear crystal-like water, in which gold and silver fish are playfully swimming about; and in the middle of this *birkat* a fountain continually throws its sportive jets to return in showers of pearls upon the many pretty little flowers that are planted round the borders. An arcade supported by elegant columns, runs round three sides; and the fourth side of the quadrangle is occupied by the lower apartments of the house. The *corna* (or cornices), are all ornamented with Arabic inscriptions, both in poetry and prose, being invariably Scripture texts.\* In little *fistakiars*, or parterres walled in with marble slabs, a few choice orange and lemon trees are carefully cultivated; and it is difficult to say whether the sweet odour of their blossoms is not rivalled, or

\* In the houses of Mahomedans the texts are from the Koran.

even surpassed, by the delicious fragrance of the roses and rich *Baghdad ful* (or dwarf jessamine), which so thickly cluster about their roots. Of the interior of such a house no one could have given a better idea than did His Excellency Mahomed Pasha, the late ambassador to the court of St. James's, who happening, during his residence in London, to give a ball, fitted up some of the apartments so as to exactly represent the interior of a Damascus house. These rooms were the leading topic of chit chat among the fashionables of London for many weeks afterwards.

I must crave the reader's permission to conduct him into one of these houses; and in so doing to introduce him to the *mistaba* or alcove in the centre, from the back of which two trellised windows overlook a spacious fruit garden. A low divan runs round its three sides, while a soft carpet covers the marble floor. The cushions, and even the divan itself, are of the richest velvet stuffs; and the numerous *étagères* in the *mistaba* are filled with costly glass-ware, crystal cups, and elegant porcelain vases. On each side is a tray, covered with a snowy napkin, the edges worked with gold and silver flowers, upon one are handsome *finjans* in filigree, silver coffee-cups, and sugar-basins; on the other, cut-glass saucers full of delicious candied sweetmeats, of which the orange-flower, violet and rose are the most fragrant. Both trays rest on low stools, the feet of which are elegantly carved. One of the adjoining rooms is fitted up with handsome *narghilies*, and long pipes with amber mouth-pieces of great value. In this room there is also a small *mangal*, or brazier, in which a charcoal fire is perpetually burning for the double purpose of boiling the often required coffee, and of supplying

the smokers with fire for their pipes, or *narghilies*. Servants are constantly in attendance in this room, and the arrival of a visitor is the signal for activity amongst them. Lemonade is first offered, and then smoking materials are put in requisition; after this, the sweetmeats are handed round; and lastly, coffee is served.\*

In a Pasha's house, when people call on official business, the appearance of coffee is a quiet hint to be off, or in other words, denotes a termination of that morning's visit. The visitor sips his coffee, returns the *finjan* to the attendant slave, touches heart, mouth, and head to the Pasha, and then bows himself out. The room opposite to this smoking apartment, is usually the dormitory of the servants; its outside appearance is handsome, and the closed door is tastefully carved and painted, but the interior is by no means inviting—heaps of mattresses are piled up on all sides, and perchance even a small store of provisions for domestic consumption. In this respect this lumber-room is quite different to the usual appearance of things in Damascus, for the outside is the best-looking part of it. So much for the interior of the houses; now let us see how the ladies look when they are within doors, and have laid aside the *izar* and odious black handkerchief. We will first describe the daughter of the host; a very fair specimen of her sex in Damascus. Her eyes are beautifully dark, her eyelashes, eyebrows, and hair, of a glossy jet black, the latter tinged with *henna*, hangs down her

\* It is the fashion of Damascus, and generally in the East, for the lady of the house to first sip the coffee and then hand it to the visitor as a mark of favour; and on my first arrival in London I used to do the same, much to the astonishment of my English lady-friends.



back and reaches nearly to the ground in a succession of plaits, each terminating with black silk braid, knotted and interwoven with various sized golden coins, her features (excepting the eyes) are all small but compact, The nose is Grecian, the lips cherry, and slightly pouting, the chin dimpled, the form of the face oval, and the complexion clear, with a rosy tint. The bust and figure are unexceptionable, the arms comely, the wrists and ankles well turned, and the feet and hands perfect models for a sculptor; yet this is one out of the many nondescript beings that we encountered, with *izar* and veil in the street. Her face and figure are well set off by the head-dress and oriental costume. On the top of her head she wears a small red cap, which is encircled by a handsomely flowered handkerchief, and over the latter strings of pearls and pieces of small gold money are tastefully arranged in festoons. In the centre of her red cap is a diamond crescent, from which hangs a long golden cord, with a blue silk tassel, usually ornamented with pearls: her vest fits tight, and admirably displays the unlaced figure. In summer this vest is of blue or pink satin, bordered and fringed with gold lace; in winter, cloth, edged with fur, is substituted for the satin; and over the vest is worn a short grey jacket, chastely embroidered with black silk braid. The vest is confined to the waist by a *zunnar*, in summer, of a silk Tripoli scarf, in winter by a costly cashmere shawl, and from under this a long robe reaches to her ankles, and is divided into two long lappels lined with satin and fringed with costly trimmings. This latter robe partially conceals the *shirwal*, or full trowsers, which hang loosely over, and are fastened round the ankles; the tasty mixture of colors, and the graceful arrangement, renders the costume a perfect study. Latterly European shoes

have been much used by the Damascene ladies, especially those gaily flowered kid shoes, imported into Syria from Marseilles. This completes the young lady's toilet, and her walk and action are as graceful as her figure and face are prepossessing ; but beyond the *naam* (yes) and *la* (no) of conversation, you can seldom get a word from her unless you are a very intimate friend of the family, and then these young ladies are as fond of a little romping or quizzing as their more accomplished and more elegant sisters of the North. It is a mistake to imagine that the natives of the Turkish empire are wholly excluded from any friendly intercourse with the women of those countries, a tale which has gained credence and been perseveringly maintained by travellers, few of whom have ever had an opportunity of testing the truth of the report by personal experience.

Amongst the higher classes of the Greek persuasion in particular, every freedom exists in doors ; young ladies not only shew themselves, but, after serving the guest with coffee and sweetmeats, they will seat themselves on the edge of the divan, and soon manage to join in the conversation. This state of freedom exists to a greater or less degree till the young girl is betrothed ; then it is not considered decorous that she should be present whenever her intended bridegroom visits the house, neither should she hear his name mentioned. Even amongst Turks, and more especially in the villages and smaller towns of Syria, the young Mahomedan sees and converses with the future object of his love until she attains her eleventh or twelfth year ; she is then excluded from the society of men ; but womanhood has already begun to develop itself in the person of the girl of ten or eleven years old in these

climates, where they are oftentimes wives and mothers at thirteen. Hence love exists between the young couple before the destined bridegroom urges his mother to make the requisite proposals of marriage. He loses sight of his lady-love as soon as she enters upon womanhood, though he may, by means of a third party, catch an occasional glimpse of her features as she passes to and fro, strictly guarded by matrons and old duennas ; but not a single word or one bewitching kiss can the despairing lover hope for until she is brought home to his house, his lawful consort and partner for life ; then, and not till then, commences the great seclusion of the ladies of the Turkish hareem. Even this, in country places and villages, though the newly-married bride may be strictly guarded for a year or two, this feeling eventually wears off, and the women mix in the everyday occupations of the field or in the garden, unveiled and undistinguishable from their Christian neighbours. Of late years especially much progress has been made in this branch of civilisation, arising from the example set by the sultan's ladies themselves at Stamboul, and by the increase of European ladies at Beyrout and other towns in Syria, often travelling about the country, and who, though unveiled, enjoy a high reputation for virtue and honesty, convincing proof to the Turks, that the face, which is the mirror of the heart, was meant to be studied as an example, not as a concealed vessel of craft and guile.

But to return to Damascus. We have now, gentle reader, taken a brief survey of the court-yards and lower portion of the houses ; and having been served with sweetmeats by the pretty young lady, we follow the matron of the house up stairs, to reach which we have to cross the yard, for there is no communication

between the lower and upper story, and we must pass into the arcade for the steps. Now that we have reached the upper story ; there is a room on either side of the *mistaba* communicating with a gallery : and these rooms are the sleeping apartments of the family in winter. In summer they serve as dressing-rooms and as a receptacle for the matrasses, etc., that are nightly spread on the top of the house for the family to sleep upon ; for in summer every one sleeps on the terrace, from the lord and master of the house and the lowest menial down to the very cats and dogs, whose instinct causes them to seek for coolness in the more elevated parts of the house. These rooms are gaily painted, but contain little or no furniture ; a divan or so, a mirror, some flower-vases, and ladies' nic-nacs ; these constitute the furniture. Mounting up to the terrace, we come upon a belvidere, surrounded on three sides by a wall lofty enough to prevent the possibility of the tallest man accidentally over-looking his neighbour's court-yard ; on the fourth side there is a wooden railing, from which we command a view of our own court-yard, catching a glimpse of some of the famed gardens of Damascus in the distance.

The bazars of the city, crowded with busy purchasers, present a bustling scene to the stranger. After Constantinople, Damascus claims precedence for the quantity and richness of the stuffs displayed for sale in its bazars from all countries in the world. Indian manufactures, spices of Arabia, coffee from Mocha, and endless European wares, are hourly bartered and sold. The scent of sandal-wood and myrrh, the *attar* of Mecca, the Indian's curry ingredients, the rich drugs of the apothecary, the smoky perfumes of the scented *narghili* and pipe of *Jabaliy* tobacco ; all these tend to confuse and stupify

the bewildered European, who, pushing his way through the dense multitude, follows us into a native restaurant, where iced lemonade and sweetmeats are tantalisingly exposed for sale. The pleasant cold water, playing in artificial jets, turns a small tin watermill, hung with little silver bells, whose pleasant music first attracts the attention of the busy stranger. Here, seated for a moment, we enjoy the passing scene, and are vastly refreshed by the good things furnished; but the place is crowded with a thirsty multitude, and the swarms of flies that alight on one's face and hands, make quiet and repose completely out of the question; so we are up again and hurrying through the bazars towards the environs of the city. The day is too hot and the distance too great for a walk, so we hire horses and a native cicerone.

The beauty of the environs of Damascus I can only compare to some lovely landscape of fancy's brightest imagining, in which is combined every rich and bountiful gift of providence—flowers, fruits, waters, hills, plains, rivers; a cloudless, blue sky; a rich, brilliant sunlight; and the delicious zephyr breathing soft freshness over the scene. It may well be believed by the zealous Mussulmans of Damascus, that Mahomed, as he beheld it from the western hills, declined to enter into the city, lest the luxurious richness of this earthly Paradise might induce him to forget the existence of another and an eternal one. Skilfully did the prophet make a virtue of necessity in this instance. He well knew his incapability of besieging the city. I am inclined to think that, had it been otherwise, Mahomed was far too eager after earthly enjoyments to have relinquished so fair a spot.

Our guide fails not to point out to us two branches



of the Barrada reckoned to be Abana and Pharpar, rivers which Naaman, the leper, thought better than the waters of Jordan. The lions to be seen at Damascus are numerous. Amongst these, we visit the *Bab il* Gharbi, where Tamerlane heaped up a pyramid of heads after taking the city by storm; then the monument called *Nabiy Abel*, marking; it is said, the identical spot where Cain slew his innocent brother. The name of the city is presumed by some to be derived from this event, the word *damm* signifying "blood"; but I must confess, I cannot see much ground for this presumption. If any truth be attached to this tradition, our first parents cannot well have wandered far from the lovely Garden of Eden when this first tragedy occurred; and Eden must have been situated to the west of Damascus, as it is said, that the angel of the Lord guarded the east end of the garden—a proof that our first parents were sent out eastward, and could only endeavour to return from that side. Some natives imagine that the Hammah and Hums of the present day are on the site of the beautiful garden of gardens. The eastern gate of the city, now walled up, is where St. Paul is supposed to have been let down in a basket; they shew us the very house from which he is said to have escaped. The Christian cemetery, containing the tomb of St. George, and the arch where St. Paul hid himself on escaping from Damascus; the wide road beyond the cemetery, still highly revered as the spot of the miraculous conversion; all these were familiar to me during my long stay in this fair city; and I mention them here for the benefit of strangers visiting the spot.

During the summer evenings, my relative, at whose house I was staying, gave frequent entertainments to his friends and acquaintances amongst the inhabitants



of Damascus. On these occasions, the ladies of the different families honoured us with their presence, and occasionally some of the European consuls and merchants were invited. A description of one evening party will describe the whole. First, then, we will introduce the stranger into the house where the *farah* (feast) is to be held. Women are busily occupied washing out and sweeping the court-yard; the flowers and other plants are fresh watered; the marble fountain is decorated with coloured lanterns and festoons of flowers; carpets are spread, and divan cushions ranged against the walls; the *mistaba* is tastefully lighted, and a highly inflammable torch, composed of the fat wood of fir, resin, and other ingredients, is planted in each of the four corners. In the smoking apartment of the *mistaba*, preparations are making on a grand scale. Large bags of ready-washed and prepared *timbac* are hung upon nails in the wall, to filter and to be fit for immediate use when the *narghilies* are called into requisition. Tobacco pouches are filled. Two additional *mangals* of charcoal-fire and some additional coffee-pots are prepared. Decanters, are filled with *arraki*, wine, liqueurs, orange-flower and rose-water; and the cut-glass saucers replenished with candied preserves; whilst two maid-servants and a boy, assisted and superintended by the mistress of the house, are busy grinding coffee and decocting huge bowls of deliciously-iced lemonade. In addition to all this a side-table is groaning under the weight of plates of sliced oranges and picked pomegranates, with numerous other fruits, and a great variety of pastry. By the time all these arrangements are completed the night sets in; the whole yard is illuminated; the members of the household and the servants are busily engaged donning their best attire, and

the company of hired musicians arrive. The music striking up, is the signal for the nearest invited neighbours to make their appearance. They arrive, the men clad in long, loose silken robes; the women enveloped in their white *izars*; but these latter are speedily thrown aside at the invitation of the lady of the house, who assists in helping the guests to disrobe, and then confides their *izars* to the trusty care of the handmaiden.

Now these veils are all of the same make, and they have no initials or other distinguishing mark. Notwithstanding this, no confusion ensues on the breaking up of a party as to identification, every lady is quick to recognise her own peculiar *izar* from the mass of white sheets that are folded and piled one above another upon the divan in the upstairs dressing-room. Soon the whole party have arrived, and the amusements of the evening commence with vocal and instrumental music. After this, some of the gentlemen stand up and go through the graceful attitudes of the Syrian dance, then some others volunteer the sword dance, or the Bedouin dance, some of the married ladies then take courage; but it requires coaxing and threats to induce the timid damsel to display her skill. Persuasion being out of the question, some old gentleman gets up and pretends that he is going to dance instead of her, and he goes through a few steps till he comes close up to some girl that he has singled out from the circle. Seizing her arm with no very gentle force, he whirls into the centre of the yard, and meanwhile some one who has watched the manœuvre, acts the same part by some other blushing maiden. These are confronted face to face, and there is now no escape, so they commence at first timidly and bashfully, but getting gradually excited by the music, they lose all this pre-

tended bashfulness, and do their best to outshine each other; and truly there is rarely a more graceful sight than two beautiful Damascene girls, elegantly dressed and bespangled with jewels, displaying their graceful figures to the best advantage, to the slow but becoming measures of the dance. All the other young ladies now follow their example, and as each couple retires at the termination of their efforts to please, they are hailed with shouts of applause, and liberally besprinkled with rose and orange-flower water. The old ladies evince their approbation by a peculiar vibrating scream, produced by the voice passing through the nearly closed lips, whilst the under lip is kept in a continual tremulous state by the rapid application of the back of the fore finger to that feature. When dancing is over for the evening, games of forfeit are introduced, and promote much mirth, especially one game called "*Tuthun Tuthun, min Tuthun*"—a game of Turkish origin, as its name denotes, and which is played thus:—Every one in the circle takes the name of a bird, a tree, or a flower, whilst the king of the game goes round and collects in a handkerchief some small article from each one present. These he afterwards shuffles together, and then drawing one out which he carefully conceals in his hand, he fixes upon some one in the circle, to whom he puts the question — "*Tuthun Tuthun, min Tuthun?*" or, "Tobacco tobacco, whose is it?" The party fixed upon is obliged to guess, and he names some bird or flower which he heard some one call himself; if the guess is wrong, he has to hold out his hand and receive three stripes from a closely knotted handkerchief, and then the party referred to is next obliged to guess to whom the "*Tuthun*" belongs, and so on all round the circle till the right name has been discovered. Then

the king resigns his post and handkerchief, and is relieved in his office by him or her that made the right guess.

After these games some one tells a story or recites a poem, a specimen of which I am enabled to introduce, literally translated.

## I.

ALAS ! and ah well a-day, that my rose-faced love, my intimate, my soul's companion, should be enveloped in her shroud ! That tongue, once familiar with so many languages, gives utterance now to none. I listen vainly and am astonished not to hear thy once-loved voice.

## II.

Tell me, O Grave, tell me, is her incomparable beauty gone ? Has she, too, faded as the petals fall from the sweetest flower, and her lovely face changed—changed and gone ! Thou art not a garden, O Grave ; nor yet heaven ; still all the fairest flowers and the brightest plants are culled by thee.

## III.

O black, mysterious Ground, tell me how or wherefore have we sinned, that thou art prone to hug the beautiful, the chaste, the rare—and yet so cold thy love. Stones alone hast thou for pillows for the tender, the loved, the fair.

## IV.

O Ground—confusion to thy face!—think not the treasure that is withering in thy grasp is thine. O no ! Thank God, her soul, her immortality, is far beyond thy reach.

## V.

Earth, unfeeling Earth, thy heart is adamant ; nor hope nor pity find a place in thee. Yet seeds sown in thy bosom spring up as flowers beautiful and rare. Without thee, a solitary soul—a blank is the world to me—nor merry laugh nor cheerful glance has now a charm.

## VI.

Sometimes I weep alone to think that I have lost thy love for ever—and then, oh ! bitterly I weep to see thy mother's furrowed brow—full well she feels the treasure lost—the young child and the beautiful. I marvel not, angel, that thou art gone—for heaven were better fitted for thy home than earth ; but I marvel that we can live yet awhile on earth—live without thy smile.

## VII.

And thou who couldst barely resist the cold—thy fate is hard—nor friend to whisper comfort, nor careful eye to watch—in thy cold, solitary, mysterious grave—none can give comfort. But how foolish ! I speak to dust. Thy soul, thank God ! is far beyond the hurt of man or evil spirit.

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I will now endeavour to give my readers a specimen of an original Arabic tale in the familiar and colloquial style of these Oriental storytellers so famed for their amusing delivery and gesticulation.

## THE STORY OF THE JINN AND THE SCOLDING WIFE.

ONCE upon a time, many years ago, when good people were rather scarce upon the earth, and such men as Noah had ceased to exist, there dwelt a certain poor man at the city of Aleppo, whose name was—I forget now exactly what ; but as his heirs might not take it in good part, we had best leave the name-part of the business alone altogether. However, he was fortunate enough to pick up with a pretty little wife, whose smiles, so thought the lover, were like the dew of Hermon ; instead of which, they proved to be very mildew in every sense of the word. Yusuf—so was the man called, but, I forgot, we must not mention it—married the fair Ankafr. First week, honey and kaymak, and everything nice and sweet ; second week, necklaces and other jewellery required ; third week, funds low, dinners scant, temper sour ; fourth week, squalls matrimonial from morning to night, from night to morning.



"I tell you what it is, my dear," quoth Yusuf, "either you must leave off blowing up, or I must take to bastinadoing: so just you choose the least evil."

To hear her talk of his inhumanity—to hear her talk of her rich relations and their influence with the Pasha—to hear her storm about broken hearts and, what is a great deal more serious and matter-of-fact, broken heads—I say, to hear her jabber about all this, was enough to turn a quiet, sober-minded man into a misanthrope for life; but, to feel the argument in the shape of sundry manipulations, cuffs on the ear, scratches, etc., this was beyond the endurance of a martyr; so thought Yusuf, so did his friends, and so did the evil counsellors that recommended him to resort to the use of water as an only alternative.

Now, I don't mean to say, mind you, that they suggested, that water, as an every-day kind of a beverage, was likely to be productive of very beneficial effects; neither did they hint that arraki and water, though this latter has often done the job, would facilitate in ridding Yusuf of his incubus. The river Euphrates was thought deep enough—a casualty in the upset of a boat, plausible. The desperate husband took the hint. One day he had a headache. Next day, change of air was thought requisite, and the water-side recommended. He went to Berijek thence to the river-side. A friendly old boatman hired him a boat and his own personal services, and

Upon the stream they got 'em.

The wind blew high; he blew his nose,

And—sent her to the bottom.

She sunk, never again to rise, and the light-hearted husband leaped out of the boat and strolled along the river-side.

By and bye, a damp-looking old customer, half Neptune, half I don't know what you may call it, comes walking up the river, just as coolly as a ship of war might float on the ocean, and as fresh as though he had only just got in for a dip, instead of having floated ever so many hundred miles.

"Salām alaykum," says Yusuf, "I hope you're well."

"Peace, thou son of a swine," says the stranger; "What do you mean by sending her there to bother us?"

"Who is it you mean, sir?"

"Who," said the fierce little man, who was nothing more or less than the Jinn, or Spirit of the Water, "why her, to be sure,



that vixen of a wife of yours, who has completely defiled the water. Why there is no peace any more in those regions, and I have come forth to take a signal vengeance on you : now choose what death you like—hanging, tearing in pieces, or impaling.

“Sir,” said Yusuf, very humbly, “if you, who are possessed of so much power, cannot control her temper, how could I, a miserable mortal, hope to manage her ?”

There was so much truth in this assertion, that the Jinn calmed down amazingly. “My friend,” quoth he, “I see you’re a sensible man ; you and I will henceforth unite our fortunes ; so just have the kindness to step upon my shoulders, and we will be off like a lightning-flash for Baghdad.” Yusuf did as he was desired ; and in the course of the next hour, they were safely housed in Baghdad. Now the Caliph had an only daughter, who was reported beautiful as the morning star.

“Would you like to have her,” quoth the Jinn, “for a wife ?”

“Who, me, sir ; I am very much obliged to you,” quoth Yusuf ; “but I don’t exactly see how that is to be accomplished.”

“Oh, I will manage that part of the matter. You pass yourself off for a great *hakīm*. I will coil myself round the girl’s neck in the shape of a most venomous snake with two heads. No one shall be able to approach but you. You burn that bit of paper that I have written upon, and throw the ashes into water, and as it is demolished, so will I gradually disappear. The results will be the Caliph’s gratitude and his daughter’s hand and heart.”

Yusuf was very willing to do as he was bid. The feat was accomplished. He married the girl and settled down for life in easy circumstances. Some time after, the Jinn fell desperately in love with the Vizier’s daughter, and displayed his attachment in the rather uncongenial form of a viper. Now the Caliph had borne in mind the notoriety of his son-in-law in this peculiar species of malady ; so when the vizier came moaning and complaining that Yusuf would not go and cure his daughter, he sent his compliments to Yusuf, with a silken cord and the alternative carefully tied up in an embroidered pocket-handkerchief—of immediate compliance with his will—an arsenic pill or strangulation. Yusuf had no remedy, though he had faithfully promised the Jinn never to intrude upon his felicity. He hit, however, upon a plausible excuse, and being introduced into

the presence of the Vizier's daughter, he bent over her neck and whispered to the Jinn—

"I say, I've just dropped in to warn you that she is here in Baghdad, and looking for you."

"Why, you don't mean her?" said the alarmed Jinn.

"But I do though, sure as you are a ghost."

"I say, you wont say where I am off to, will you," says the Jinn; "but if you will just pack up your salāms and any other light articles you may wish to send to your friends, I'll be happy to be the bearer. I'm off."

"Are you, though?" says Yusuf.

"Yes I am," said the Jinn.

"I'd rather stem an angry wave

Than meet a storming woman."

And so saying, he departed, and the vizier's daughter was healed.

Refreshments have been served at intervals; and the smoking has been incessant, the married ladies, especially mothers of families, indulging in whiffs at the *narghili*. It is considered unbecoming in a young lady to smoke, and they never do so in public: but as they often serve the *narghili* to distinguished guests, they are compelled to take some whiffs, as it is customary to present it lighted; and as this process does not appear to make them feel unwell, we naturally imagine that on the sly these young ladies frequently indulge themselves with a pipe. This, kind reader, is a fair sample of the manner in which the Damascus Christians amuse themselves during the evening.

Once Mr. Farren, the then British Consul-General at Damascus, gave a grand entertainment to celebrate the king's birth-day. To this, my relative and myself were invited, in common with several of the Mahomedan chiefs and Christian inhabitants of Damascus, who were utterly astounded at the magnificent display of European luxury. The rooms were decorated

with flags of all nations, and splendidly furnished à l'Anglaise; and it was probably the first *fête* of the kind that many of these people had ever witnessed. Every one was much charmed with the affable manners of the Consul, and impressed with the wealth and dignity of the nation he represented. And this kind of display was doubtless very beneficial in curbing the fanatical hatred of the Damascus Mahomedans towards *Kuffar* in general, which, at that time, raged to such a pitch that no Christian could, without insult, traverse the streets of Damascus on horseback, especially with a white turban, till the interpreter of Mr. Farren ventured to break through the law. Amongst the Moslems in Syria, those only who are direct descendants of the prophet, or who have accompanied the Hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca, are permitted to wear a green turban, the other Mahomedans a white one. In the mountains it is worn indiscriminately by all creeds. In Turkey, those born on Friday are entitled to wear green. This fact surprised an English friend at Constantinople, who seeing so many green turbans, and not being aware of this latter circumstance, observed that the prophet must have a large family.

During Ibrahim Pacha's occupation of the country, he did much towards bringing these haughty and cruel Mahomedans to a due appreciation of their own nothingness, and the Damascus of to-day is a very different town to the Damascus of some twenty years back. Now Christians, and even Jews, in all garbs and costumes ride to and fro unmolested, and since the departure of the Egyptians, no small share of praise is due to the energy and exertions of Mr. Richard Wood, the present consul, who is so much respected by the natives as to be distinguished amongst them by

the Turkish title of Bey and who has successfully persevered in maintaining the privileges afforded to residents and strangers of all creeds under the iron sway of Ibrahim Pasha.

The Roman Catholics have made comparatively few converts in Damascus, and the mysterious disappearance a few years since of Padre Tomaso and his servant, acts as a check upon the Jesuits, who mostly avoid those places where every security is not afforded, and where great temporal advantages do not accompany the success of their efforts at conversion.

By the last published report of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the heart is cheered with the intelligence that there are now established in Damascus three American and two Irish Missionaries. May their efforts be crowned with success; for Damascus is said to contain about 140,000 inhabitants, all, more or less, superstitiously ignorant and blind to the blessed light of the gospel!

Damascus existed even before the patriarch Abraham's time, being referred to as a well known place in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis; it was the capital of Syria, founded by Rezin, and was sacked by Jeroboam II., king of Israel. It is now a comparatively thriving and populous city, and has those natural resources of climate, soil, and abundance of water which cannot fail to perpetuate its fame as the garden of the East. That scourge of nations, the cholera, did not, however, exempt the fair environs of Sham in its progress from east to west in 1848. Thousands fell victims to its ravages, and even many of the pleasant and open villages in the neighbourhood were desolated by the *hawa al Asfar*, or the yellow wind, as the Syrians designate that terrible plague.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE AMERICAN MISSIONARIES AT BEYROUT.

AFTER a residence of upwards of two years at Damascus, I was suddenly, in the spring of the year recalled to Beyrout, this latter town having, in my absence, grown into considerable importance as a commercial sea-port. The traffic with European countries daily augmenting, had given an impetus to several enterprising young Syrians, who wished to acquire a knowledge of European languages; and as precedents were not wanting of this knowledge having led to preferment and subsequent opulence, my family conceived the idea of placing me under the care of some of the excellent American Missionaries, for tuition in English and other European languages. It was not without reluctance that I obeyed the mandate of my friends, but as implicit obedience to their will was a primary consideration, bidding adieu to my many kind acquaintances, I retraced my steps, and in the course of a few days was once again in the bosom of my own dear family. The Americans have always numbered amongst their fraternity a medical officer; and it was mainly attributable to this fact, that myself, as well as many other Syrian lads, were happily blessed with the opportunity of receiving a good moral education. I was just entering on eighteen when I first joined the American school; still too young to have any deeply-rooted prejudices or ideas, though luckily old enough to appre-



ciate the value of the opportunity thus afforded me, and consequently to endeavour to profit by it as much as lay in my power; but I must here explain how it happened that a physician was, through the blessing of Providence, the means of gaining for us so priceless a boon. When the American Missionaries first arrived in Syria, their advent gave rise to conjecture and suspicion amongst the natives. Bishops and priests warned their congregations to be on the alert, and guard against any efforts made by the Missionaries to convert the people; these admonitions and warnings were strengthened by reports spread by the crafty emissaries of the Pope, which were as false as they were calumnious. It was no part of Roman Catholic policy to countenance the good endeavours of these Missionaries to enlighten the natives of the country, by the establishment of schools and circulation of the holy word of God, as contained in Arabic Bibles, printed by the Church Missionary Society in London. Heretofore the Papists had to grapple only with the superstitious but simple-minded followers of the Eastern Church. In Aleppo and Beyrout they had already Syrian Catholics, whose talents were employed to hinder the work of the missionaries; but now they had formidable opponents to combat with—men as infinitely their superiors in wisdom and acquirements, as they were religiously steadfast, and persevering with all humility and patience to carry out their ends, for the accomplishment of which, they had left their distant country, and sacrificed home and every comfort. What the Roman Catholics had most to dread, was the establishment of Protestant schools, a measure which they clearly foresaw would tend to their ultimate confusion and defeat, and to overthrow which they left no means untried. Had not the Americans been



possessed of great Christian patience, and matured sound judgment, they could not possibly have succeeded; but time proved their deeds and actions to be the purest; their morals, precepts, and examples, above praise; the blessing of God was with them, and they watched and prayed continually. At length an opportunity presented itself; and they, like careful sentries, availed themselves of it, and from that time up to the present date their schools have gone on progressing, and though they have not succeeded in making many converts, they have prevented much evil by their watchful care over the natives. Sickness is a leveller of many prejudices; and this is more particularly the case in Syria, where physicians are scarce and must be selected without regard to creed. From time immemorial the natives have placed implicit faith in the skill of Frank *hakim*: of late years English and American doctors have more particularly risen in their confidence. This is chiefly owing to the Turkish empire having been inundated with a set of *soi-disant* physicians, many of whom were political refugees and renegades, untutored and totally ignorant of the profession they aped. Happily no Englishman or American has ever been convicted of thus imposing on the Syrians: such among them as have appeared were regularly educated physicians and surgeons. The resident consul could always satisfy himself on this point, and thus give confidence to the people. Italians, Frenchmen, Germans, Poles, in short, subjects of almost every other European power have, by virtue of a piece of parchment (forged or purchased) and a few drugs, foisted themselves upon the notice of Syrians as eminent practitioners; but their exorbitant charges and unsuccessful practice soon opened the eyes of the people as to their real position, yet not before these

charlatans had worked out for their medical brethren so foul a reputation, that the natives have become suspicious of all new-comers, and would rather have recourse to the simple remedies prescribed by the village herb doctor, than entrust their lives to be experimentalised upon by foreign quacks.

Apropos of this, I may mention an anecdote that was related to me by Mr. Edward Zohrab, the respected Turkish Consul-General in London. This gentleman, once travelling in the interior of Turkey, had the misfortune to fall ill at a remote village where all hopes of succour were despaired of; whilst debating with the Sheikh of the village on the feasibility of despatching an express messenger to the nearest large town in search of medical aid, there arrived, most opportunely, a European traveller who had taken up his lodgings for the night at the public khan of the village; this grandee's servant soon spread the fame of his master in the place.

"He is," said he, "the only learned Frank physician in Turkey. He has been *hakim* to all the great *padshahs* of Europe, and is only travelling here to find some rare drugs and medicinal stones for the great emperor of Moscof."

"Is he?" said the delighted Sheikh, who had rushed to seek aid from the stranger.

"Then for Allah's sake bring him with all speed to my residence; for there is a *miri liwa* dying there of fever; and if anything happens in my house what's to become of me and my family?"

The learned physician accompanied the Sheikh to his house, and in him, Mr. Zohrab discovered, to his utter amazement and discomfort, the person of a once respectable Italian ship-chandler who had carried on business

some years back at Constantinople, but who subsequently failing, had donned the cap and cloak of a mountebank and went about quacking the natives. It is needless to say that the discomfited doctor made a precipitate retreat from the village. But to return to the subject after this digression, the good done by the American physician was peculiarly instanced in my own family.

A very near relative lay grievously ill at Beyrout—every effort of the native *hakim* to give him sleep proved abortive. Native astrologers came, and writing down the names and number of letters in each name of the patient and of his mother, multiplied and divided the sum total, and then tearing up the paper into fine shreds, swallowed the whole; but even this magic failed. After much discussion, it was finally determined, much to the disgust of my clerical uncle, to summon the American doctor, with whom or with whose brethren my family had heretofore carefully avoided intercourse.

The doctor came—his mild gentle demeanour—his soft sweet words of consolation—his consummate skill—and his great talents as a man of learning—all these gained for him the deepest respect and regard, whilst his indefatigable attention to the invalid claimed our gratitude. We, in common with our neighbours, had entertained a vulgar prejudice against this good man, because it was generally asserted that wherever he could introduce himself under the cloak of his profession to the sick and dying, he invariably profited by the opportunity to sow discord amongst the members of the family by propagating doctrines strangely at variance with their creed. How false these accusations—how gross the calumnies heaped upon him, and through whose agency they had originated, now became clear to my family and their friends, and we now

esteemed these kind Americans the better from a sense of having unjustly injured them, though it were only in thought. During my relative's long and dangerous illness the doctor's kindness was above praise—he never intruded a single question or made any reference to difference of creeds; but when the patient was convalescent, and when he saw that his visits were no longer necessary, on taking leave of us, the doctor distributed a few tracts on religious subjects amongst ourselves and neighbours, begging us at our leisure to peruse them. Had he done this before we had become acquainted with his intrinsic worth and merits, the chances are that these tracts would have been flung into the fire so soon as his back was turned. Now, however, we all felt persuaded that so good a man could never be guilty of propagating anything that was not good and moral. The result was, that his gifts were treasured up and perused with attention, and whenever the doctor paid us a friendly visit he brought with him more delightful little stories—the print was so clear—the pictures and binding so pretty, that these tracts were much prized, and very soon much sought after. The children of the native Christians and those of the American missionaries became playmates; and the prejudices that had barred the doors of the American school-room against the former were gradually removed. It was at this period that I was sent for to Beyrout; and a few weeks after my arrival I was duly installed as one amongst other native students under the kind tuition of Messrs. Goodall and Whiting of the mission.

I can never sufficiently express my deep sense of gratitude to these two excellent gentlemen. Under them I acquired the rudiments of a good general education; and as my knowledge of their language grew

apace, I was afforded free access to such books, both amusing and instructive, as were well calculated to engraft a thirst after knowledge and develop the understanding. Generally speaking, all the native scholars, sooner or later, comprehended the wide difference existing between the Gospel truths as expounded in the Eastern churches, and the true sense and comprehensive meaning of the Word of God as contained in the holy Bible, such as it was our custom to peruse, morning, noon and night. We discovered that the Bible was a pleasant book, full of entertaining history and adventure, and abounding with illustrations of the marvellous mercy and love of the Creator for the creature; and that this book should be forbidden by the Romish priests at first appeared to us singular; then very wrong: and ultimately we felt convinced that in so doing they were guilty of a heinous offence.

My education consisted in simple lessons, reading, writing, and arithmetic. However, I made no great progress in worldly knowledge; but the precepts and examples of my kind instructors were, I trust, a good seed sown in season; they took root in the tender soil of childish simplicity; they shot up with childhood and ripened with the years of maturity; and I humbly hope that, with the blessing of the Almighty, they may never hereafter be choked by those *tares* sown by Satan—the sinful vanities and pleasures of this world.

I remember, amongst the many anecdotes and incidents of those happy days, one which made a deep impression upon myself and my fellow-students. During the fruit season, as our school-house at Beyrout was situated amongst the gardens, we boys made frequent excursions in the night to pillage the neighbouring orchards of their superabundant loads of fruit; this



was a common practice amongst all the lads of the town of Beyrout; and though doubtless very wrong, still fruit is so cheap and so plentiful that, even when detected by the proprietors, our punishment rarely exceeded a cuff or two on the ears, and many direful threats as to any future offence. Notwithstanding these threats, however, the fruit was too tempting to be so easily relinquished. One night I sallied out with several other of my schoolfellows, and amongst these a young chief of the Druses, named Sheikh Ahmed,—a boy of undaunted courage, and who, in after-years, as I will explain further on, was the means of saving the life of one connected with the mission school. On this eventful night, sentries had been set to watch our movements, and we were all taken in the very act. The angry proprietor made us bear the brunt of all his losses; and so, after being very roughly treated and deprived of all our plunder, we were set free and permitted to run home again as best we could, with rueful faces and aching limbs.

By some means, a report of this transaction had reached the school-master's ears by times next morning, though we were ignorant of this fact till breakfast-time arrived; then, with keen appetites, we resorted to our usual place at the breakfast-table, when lo! there were nothing but plates turned bottom upwards laid for such amongst us as had been engaged in the orchard-rifling affair. The rest of the boys, who were well supplied with dainties, were quite at a loss to account for this deficiency; but our guilty consciences plainly whispered to us the motives for this punishment; we, therefore, sneaked out of the room, inwardly determined never to expose ourselves to such well-merited treatment again; and we firmly adhered to our resolution. This silent and



mild method of punishing an offence had far more effect with us than rougher treatment; and the chances are, that if we had been publicly upbraided, whipped, and tasked, we should not so quickly have amended.

The Sheikh Ahmed, after having left school, whilst heading his own people, the Druses, during the war in Lebanon, one day suddenly came upon a group of angry villagers, who were about to wreak their vengeance upon an unhappy traveller who had fallen into their hands. The young Sheikh authoritatively interfered and swore by his beard no harm should be done to him. In the traveller, to his astonishment and joy, Sheikh Ahmed identified the Arabic professor of the mission school,—a simple, good man, to whose care and tuition we were all much indebted, and who, having been mistaken for a Maronite, was about falling a victim to mistaken identity. The name of this intelligent and excellent man was Tannoos Haddad, who had been converted to Christianity by the American missionaries, and has since been ordained, and is now assisting in the spread of the Gospel among his benighted countrymen. The head of the school at that time was Mr. Hubbard, who a few years after died at Malta, and many a young man now in Syria gratefully recalls his memory as having been the means of their education and advancement both in temporal and spiritual knowledge.

At present, the following is a list of the missionaries at Beyrout:—Rev. Eli Smith, D.D.; Rev. B. Whiting; H. A. D. Forest, M.D.; Mr. Hurtes, superintendent of the printing department; Buttros Bistani, and Elias Fowas, native helpers. No one has ever replaced the late Mr. Winbolt, the much-esteemed and regretted chaplain of Beyrout; and the Americans are about to

remove to the mountains. Lord help the souls of the forty thousand inhabitants now living there, and put it in the hearts of the English people to establish schools and hospitals in this most promising field for missionary labour.

Beyrout was, at the period of which I am now writing, under the Egyptian government, and the whole place was overrun by fierce Albanian soldiers and recruits, who were the terror of society. Many are the instances on record of the outrages committed by these men; but their treatment of the esteemed Mr. Bird, an American missionary, was perhaps the most glaring instance of unprovoked atrocity.

Mr. Bird had a country-house in the environs of Beyrout, not far from where some of the troops were encamped. This house was surrounded by a large fruit-garden, and the produce was continually stolen and recklessly wasted; for which, however, there appears to have been no remedy. On one occasion, Mr. Bird's native servant, seeing some soldiers pilfering from a fig-tree, threw a stone, which unfortunately took effect and slightly wounded one of them in the head. Hearing the uproar that ensued, and learning the cause from his servant, Mr. B— immediately ran out with a few necessaries in his hands to examine and dress the wound. He was thus charitably occupied when a number of the man's comrades, who had been attracted by the noise, arrived upon the spot, and presuming it to be Mr. Bird who had wounded the man, made a ruffianly assault on that unoffending person, buffeted and bound him; and finally carried their cruel vengeance to such an extent, that they actually crucified him on a sycamore-tree, using cords in lieu of nails, but in every other respect blasphemously imitating the position of the figure upon

the cross, as seen by them often in pictures and on crucifixes. Here, spit upon, slapped, and derided, Mr. Bird was left for some time suffering intense agony, both of mind and body, for the hot afternoon sun shone fiercely upon him, and the sharp stings of the sand-flies drove him almost to distraction; happily the servant had made his escape into the town, and flown to the residence of the consul. So flagrant an offence naturally excited the anger of all the Europeans in Beyrout; and consuls of every nation, accompanied by their retinue, all armed to the teeth, rode forth to the rescue. On seeing so large a cavalcade advance, the troops beat to arms; and affairs now assumed a most menacing attitude on both sides. A council was held among the Europeans; and it was speedily determined that a deputation should dismount and proceed on foot to the tent of the officer commanding the troops. This was accordingly done; and the Pasha, having listened to the complaint, summoned the offenders into his presence, meanwhile issuing orders that Mr. Bird should be instantly released and brought before him, that he might speak for himself. The soldiers endeavoured to vindicate themselves, by asserting that the Franks had murdered a true believer of the prophet; and in proof of what they asserted, they had actually the audacity and folly to cause the wounded man to be carried on a few planks, hastily knocked together, and set down on the ground a few paces distant from the Pasha's tent, where the impudent fellow so well maintained the rigidity of limb and face, that he really had much the appearance of a cold stiff corpse. The Pasha's doctor, however, was close at hand; and this officer was ordered to see whether the man was really dead or in a dying condition. The doctor, who was an acute man, soon saw

how matters stood; and producing from his coat pocket a bottle of sal volatile, he dexterously applied it to the nose of the prostrate soldier, and with such good effect, that the man started up as though he had received an electric shock, and was seized with such a violent fit of sneezing, that, notwithstanding the serious position of both parties, it was found impossible to resist a simultaneous burst of laughter. The Pasha was too much enraged to join in this hilarity, which he speedily checked by thundering out to his attendants to seize upon the ringleaders in this disgraceful riot, and have them hung on the same tree upon which Mr. Bird had been exposed—a threat that would doubtless have been put into immediate execution but for the strenuous interference of good Mr. Bird, who, though still smarting from the severity of his treatment, was far too good a Christian to allow his enemies to be punished. He tried hard to beg them off altogether; but this the Pasha would not listen to, so the Europeans returned home to be out of hearing of the cries of the wretches as they underwent the severest bastinadoing ever inflicted, where flogging stops short of life.

This account will appear a perfect fable to those who only know Beyrout in its present civilised state; and vast indeed must have been the change for the better, when ladies and children can wander about the place, singly and unprotected, at all hours of the day, and even, I may venture to assert, throughout the night.

Since the expulsion of the Egyptians, in 1840, Beyrout has rapidly risen into considerable importance; and it may now be considered the chief entrepôt of Syrian commerce. At that period there were barely three or four European families established; and an English vessel only occasionally touched at the Port;

now, merchants, artizans, and shopkeepers, from all parts of Europe have flocked into the town; and barely a week passes by without three or more vessels arriving in the roads from Liverpool, London, and Holland. The roadstead presents a gay appearance on Sunday, when all the different vessels display the ensigns of their respective nations, and corresponding flags are hoisted from the tops of the consulates on shore. English, French, Sardinian, Austrian, American, Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish ships are daily arriving at, or sailing out of the port, bringing manufactures from Manchester, colonial produce from London, sugar from Hamburg, assorted cargoes from France and Italy, and numberless requisites and necessities from other parts of the world; whilst they export from Beyrout silk reeled in the many factories situated in the immediate neighbourhood and on Lebanon, grain from the interior, wool, of which some portion is contributed from my native village, and lately an enterprising American has carried off ship-loads of our Beyrout and Syrian olive oil, timber, nuts, and specimens of dried and preserved fruits. The population is rapidly increasing, the wealth augmenting, new firms are being established, fresh channels of commerce discovered, houses being built, gardens enclosed, grounds purchased and planted, till the once quiet, secluded, and almost desolate-looking Beyrout, many of whose decayed and dilapidated ruins crumbled into dust under the severe shocks of the great earthquake of 1821, has been rapidly metamorphosed into a pleasant and flourishing town, replete with handsome buildings and luxuriant gardens, presenting, as viewed from the sea, one of the handsomest marine pictures possible for the pencil of the painter to depict, or the lay of the poet to celebrate.



Please God, I hope yet to see the day when much loved Beyrout shall rival and surpass in every sense Smyrna, and even Stamboul. I often hear people in England talking about the beautiful azure skies of sunny Italy, and sighing for her shores; but I doubt very much if any part of the world can surpass some portions of Syria for climate or for beauty of scenery of every description. Those who are fond of romantic and wild scenery, have only to travel over the Lattakia mountains to gratify their tastes and inclinations. The quiet woodbine, the pleasant myrtle-shade, the jessamine and the rose, the murmuring stream and the lovely cot; these are to be met with all over Lebanon and North Syria—nature, in all her variety, collected together—hills, valleys, rivers, fountains—gardens, ocean—snow and sunshine; all these may be included in one prospect surveyed from any of the many eminences in the immediate neighbourhood of Beyrout. As for cloudless skies, all Syria possesses this charm, and it has none of the drawbacks that Italy must lament—no Popish thralldom—no revolutionary crisis always on the eve of exploding, and always stained with innocent blood. The land, it is true, is the land of the Moslem; but the present enlightened Sultan has made it a land of perfect liberty to the stranger; and more than this, a land in which he enjoys privileges that he cannot hope for in his own native country.

Beyrout is the spot for many reasons best adapted for missionary purposes; and I have long wished for the day when I may be enabled to lay before intelligent Englishmen a certain means of promoting the interests, both spiritual and temporal, of their eastern brethren with little pains-taking or trouble to themselves, but with incalculable advantages to those whom they would benefit.



Of this, however, more anon, in a chapter devoted expressly to the subject.

A great advantage derivable to Europeans settling at Beyrout is the immediate proximity of the Lebanon range of mountains ; for, though reputed an excellent climate, Beyrout is subjected to great heats during the summer season, and it not unfrequently occurs that reckless strangers unnecessarily expose themselves to the fierce rays of the sun with nothing but a flimsy hat to protect their heads. The result is brain-fever and sometimes death. The latter is very unfairly attributed to the climate. One might as well say the same of London, where several instances of *coup de soleil* have occurred during the past year ; but as some constitutions cannot stand heat, however well sheltered indoors, these have only to pitch their tents, or to repair to a neighbouring village during the summer, a pleasant half-hour or hour's ride from Beyrout. Here they may choose their own temperature, and not only this, but also gratify their own peculiar fancy with regard to scenery ; and those who love field-sports will find endless amusement and occupation amongst the hares and partridges with which the neighbourhood is literally overrun.

But the real fact of the case is, that the climate of Beyrout is extremely healthy, in proof of which I quote the general health of the natives and of those Europeans who have resided there long enough to adapt themselves to the customs of the country ; who eat but little meat during the hot months, eschew spirits and inebriating liquors, avoid violent exercise or exposure to draughts and the broiling mid-day sun ; rise early, use frequent ablutions, take gentle horse exercise, and only use fresh and ripe fruit and good vegetables. Even fish is considered

by the natives as tantamount to poison during the months of July and August; and surely nature is bountiful enough in the supply of an endless variety of delicious fruits and vegetables to enable one to subsist without much heavy and unwholesome meat. Of the benefits arising from this diet and regimen, the robust natives of the villages give ample proof; their every-day meals consist principally of bread, fruit, vegetables, rice or burghal, and cold water; with a little cup of coffee and a pipe of mild tobacco after meals to promote digestion.

## CHAPTER V.

## EXCURSION TO CYPRUS.

QUITTING my kind friends the Americans in 1836, I was appointed by the Government to accompany a distinguished European, travelling on a diplomatic mission through the East. He was an affable, kind man, and though I have often since made the tour of the places we then visited, I never so much enjoyed a journey as in his pleasant and instructive company. Our plan of route was to first visit Cyprus and Asia Minor, then the northern towns and villages of Syria, and so travel southwards as far as the limits of Syria and Palestine. All things being prepared, we set sail from Beyrout late one evening in a small felucca, which, nevertheless, in fine weather, sailed remarkably well; and, upon the whole, we were pretty comfortable on board, the entire use of the boat, to the exclusion of other passengers, having been contracted for.

The land breeze blew freshly all night, and at daylight next morning, when I staggered up, holding fast by the cords of the mast, there was not a vestige of Beyrout to be seen; indeed my inexperienced eyes could discern nothing but sea and clouds, though the Arab *raïs* positively affirmed, that what I mistook for clouds was the high land of Cyprus, looming right a-head. This was the first time in my life that I had ever found myself so far out at sea. At first the

novelty of the sight, the lovely, cool, blue colour of the waves—the azure sky, tinged with a hundred brilliant hues, all harbingers of the rising sun—the fish sportively bounding into the air—the sea-gulls—the white sails of vessels in the distance; all these were a source of amusement and speculation for the mind; but when the sun rose, and its heat soon drove me to take shelter under the lee of the large mainsail—when I had nothing to do but to watch the little boat dipping and plunging into the water—when the smell of tar, pitch, tobacco-smoke, and fried onions, assailed my nostrils; then I was fairly and dreadfully sea-sick.

I wrapped myself up in my *kaboot*, and only groaned out answers to the many kind enquiries made by my new friend and the assiduous boat's company. These latter became an intolerable nuisance. First would come the fat, greasy-looking old *raīs*, with an abominable skewer of fried meat and onions in one hand, and a nasty, well-mauled piece of bread in the other. "Eat, my son," he would say; "eat these delicious morsels, rivalling in flavour and richness the *Kabābs* of Paradise; it will strengthen your heart." A lizard or a toad could not have been more nauseous to me than was that man at that moment. Throughout the morning it was nothing but "*Ibn-i, koul, yar Ibn-i Risk Allah*" (O son, eat, O son Risk Allah). The heat grew intense towards midday. My European friend was almost as great a sufferer as myself. Happily the sea-breeze held on, and at eleven p.m. that night our felucca was safely moored at Larnaca, the seaport town of Cyprus.

During our stay at Larnaca we were lodged with the English vice-consular agent at that time, a native of the island. He was an obliging old man, who did all in his power to make our stay agreeable. I was very

much pleased with Larnaca and its hospitable inhabitants; though only so short a distance from Beyrout, the change was very great. Here there were numerous carriages and other vehicles, drawn by horses and oxen; and a drive in an open carriage was both a treat and a novelty to me, who had never been accustomed to any other mode of locomotion than walking or riding on horseback. The Greeks and the Roman Catholics had neat churches here, and the loud chiming of the church bells on a Sunday was a clear proof that the Christians of this island enjoyed more privileges, and mixed more freely with the Turks, than their brethren on the main land. To such an extraordinary pitch is this neighbourly intercourse carried, that they intermarry with each other without any distinction of creed; the only part of the Turkish dominions where such a license exists. At Larnaca the houses were neatly built, and the streets cleanly swept; there were many pleasant rides and drives about the neighbourhood, but the climate is insalubrious, and peculiarly ill adapted to European constitutions. The heat in the summer months is beyond endurance; and there are many salt-pits and marshes in the neighbourhood, which contribute greatly towards the sufferings of the inhabitants. I am sorry to say that what I saw of the natives, only helped to confirm me in those prejudices which exist against them in the East. The men are, for the most part, notorious gamblers and drunkards, and when drunk or excited, capable of any act of ferocity. Besides this, they are possessed of all the cunning of a fox, and are such lovers of mammon, that for the acquirement of wealth, they would be guilty of any dishonesty or treachery, and sacrifice even the honor and virtue of their families, at the shrine of their household deity—gold. How painful to reflect

that so many precious souls are thrown away for the want of better teaching and example ; how sad to know that they have no opportunity offered them of throwing off the heavy yoke of sin, and of bursting the bonds of Satan. But their bishops and priests are a wicked set, full of conceit and sinful lusts, selling their own souls, as well as those confided to their care, for the acquirement of filthy lucre ; and so long as they encourage the vices and dissipations of their flocks as a sure source of revenue to themselves (for however great the crime, absolution may be purchased, and slight penances imposed to expiate the most heinous sins) ; so long as such a sad state of affairs is permitted, there can be no hope of any amelioration in their degraded condition. I know not what the motives for it may be ; but poor Cyprus has, so long as I can remember, been more neglected than other parts of the East by the Missionary Societies in England and America. This is much to be lamented, and may, I hope, soon be remedied. Doubtless, for the first few years, Missionaries would have almost insuperable difficulties to contend against ; but, with God's blessing, these would gradually disappear. The climate, though perhaps unfavourable to their constitution, would be favourable to their cause, and a skilful physician be a boon to an island, where heretofore only quacks and charlatans have been within the call of suffering humanity. The late Doctor Lilburn has left a name behind him in Cyprus still revered by the poorer and sicklier inhabitants ; his kind urbanity, his charity, and attention to the sufferings of the sick, and his skill as a physician, displayed in many extraordinary cures, all these contributed to work out for him a fame which would have gradually enlarged itself, and penetrated to the remotest corners of the island, had it



pleased the Almighty to spare him yet awhile on earth; but he died, and we have every hope that his good Christian spirit is now reaping an eternal harvest of bliss.

With all the crimes and vices attached to the character of the Cypriote Greeks, they are all staunch observers of the outward forms prescribed by the elders of their church. They are rigid observers of fast days, and the same man that would hardly hesitate to rob you of your life, would rather endure any torments of hunger, or any temptation, than break through the prescribed rules of abstinence. This, in conjunction with their frequent attendance at the confessional, clearly shews the implicit faith they place in the powers and virtues of their priests; and it appears to me that this strict command over certain lusts of the flesh might, if diverted into a proper channel, redound much to their credit, and these very ruffians become devoted Christians, when they have once learnt the instability of all human hopes, the impotency of man's agency to avert a pending destruction, and to give all the glory to God, and no portion of it to princes or men.

We visited severally Nicosia, the inland capital of the kingdom, Fuma Gosta, and a few other unimportant sea-side villages. Nicosia is a very handsomely built town, with beautiful gardens, and surrounded with strongly built fortifications. The streets are sufficiently wide, and for the most part kept in admirable repair; good roads are a rare thing to meet in the East. The *majlis*, or government council, of which the Pasha himself is president, is composed of Turks and Greeks; but the greater portion are Greeks. These are the wealthiest part of the community, and carry everything

before them. In some caves attached to the houses of the most ancient Greek families, there are large supplies of old Cyprus *camandarea*, upwards of half a century in earthen jars. This wine is very expensive, and is only used as a luxury or for convalescent invalids. The supposed sites of Salamis and Paphos were pointed out to us; in the former place we are told, in the Acts of the Apostles, that Paul and Barnabas, who landed in Cyprus A.D. 44, preached Christ crucified; here also, Barnabas, who is revered as the principle Apostle and first Bishop of Cyprus, was stoned, being martyred by the Jews of Salamis: at Paphos St. Paul struck Bar-jesus with blindness, and the pro-consul embraced Christianity. The spiritual blindness of the people of the whole island is, alas! more appalling than that miraculous visitation on the blaspheming impostor. During our stay in the island, my friend was much occupied surveying and sketching, and from seeing him apparently so much attached to the elegant accomplishments, I first acquired a passion for drawing, but he had no time to instruct me; I had no means of improving myself, and so I was obliged to let the matter rest till a favourable opportunity should present itself.

The prevailing language of the island is Greek—Turkish is also spoken, but Arabic is almost unknown in the interior; a strange circumstance, considering the proximity of Cyprus to the Syrian coast.

After a month's ramble in the island, we hired a native boat at Cyprus, and sailed over to Cilicia, a voyage which we were three days in accomplishing, owing to the then prevalent light winds and calms. Mersine, the seaport of Tarshish, or Tersous, the birth-place of St. Paul, and once a city of no mean repute, is a miserable little village consisting of some half a

hundred huts, inhabited by fever-stricken, flea-bitten fellahs. There are many pleasant orange groves and citron walks in the village; and the water and shade, and verdure, form a picture of ease, and health, and comfort, that but ill accords with the really pestilential atmosphere of the neighbourhood. Small and unimportant as Mersine is in itself, it is of considerable importance to the commerce of Asia Minor, as being the nearest seaport to Tersous and Adana, whose merchants ship annually large quantities of linseed, wool, sessame, and cotton, the produce of the vast plains and valleys on either side of the Taurus range of mountains. From Mersine to Tersous is a distance of about four hours' easy riding. We left Mersine the morning after our arrival an hour before sunrise, so that we reached our destination before the sun had waxed overpoweringly hot, or the horse-flies had become annoying. The beauty of the plains we rode over, their fertility and variegated aspect, and the whole scenery around us, is scarcely surpassed in any part of the world that I have visited, before or since. Troops of swift gazelles, and hares innumerable passed our track as we crossed the plains of Adana; whilst the surrounding bushes abounded with partridges, quails, and such like game; the marshes and lakes were literally teeming with water-fowl, from the majestic swan to the insignificant sandpiper and water-rail; foxes were plentiful, and so were jackals and hyenas; and the high range of mountains that encompasses the plain on all sides, save that which faces the sea, was plentifully stocked with chetahs, leopards, and other equally undesirable neighbours. The further we rode the higher the elevation of the ground became, and the land was well laid out in cultivation. Finally, we reached the really picturesque

and vast gardens on the outskirts of the town, where we met occasional donkey-loads of the choicest fruits and vegetables. Heaps of cucumbers and lettuces were piled up near the garden-gates ready for transportation to the market, and the passers-by coolly helped themselves to some without any interference on the part of the owners or gardeners, so superabundantly does nature there produce her choicest gifts.

Tersous is in some parts handsomely built, in others it was disfigured by wretched hovels, whilst masses of putrifying vegetable and animal matter were all that met the eye or assailed the nostril. The inhabitants seemed equally distinct from each other. The occupants of the better sort of houses were stout, robust, and healthy-looking fellows, who lived upon the fat of the land and inhabited Tersous only during winter and a portion of autumn and spring, decamping with their families to the lofty and salubrious climates of Kulek Bughaz, and other pleasantly situated villages of the Taurus, as soon as the much-dreaded summer drew nigh. The inmates of the miserable hovels were, on the contrary, perfect personifications of misery and despair — sickly-looking, unfortunate *Fellahin* Christians and Jews, who must work, and work hard too, to enable them to inhabit any home however humble, and are consequently tied down to the place hot weather or cold, martyrs to fevers, dropsy, and a few other like horrible complaints common to Tersous at all times of the year, but raging to a fearful extent during the months of June, July and August. The fevers are occasioned partly from the miasma arising from the marshes in the neighbourhood and the many stagnant pools and gutters in the town itself, but chiefly from

the frightful exhalations occasioned by the mounds of putrifying camels, cows, oxen, goats, horses, and mules, which annually die off from a murrain raging amongst them, and whose carcasses are dragged to the outside of the city's old walls and there indiscriminately piled up in the dry ditches around—a carnival for jackals and glutted vultures who are so amply provided for, that even they and the packs of savage curs that infest the streets of the town, grow dainty in their pickings and become worthless scavengers from excess of feasting.

This is a frightful but faithful picture of the suburbs of modern Tersous. The very streets are equally neglected; bestrewed with the disgusting remains of dogs, cats, and similar nuisances. Indeed, Tersous might be aptly termed a mass of corruption; and yet it has not been neglected by bountiful nature. The pleasant waters of the famed Cydnus, which murmur through the very heart of the town, render its banks on either side prolific with orange and lemon trees; the sweet odour from whose blossoms, the fever wasted-form, reclining in a pleasant shade on its banks, inhales with gusto, but alas! each breath is impregnated with the noxious poisons that float heavily on the atmosphere.

The inhabitants are negligent and careless about what most vitally concerns their immediate welfare, vainly sweeping out and cleansing their own particular court-yards and houses, whilst the streets and the suburbs are teeming with the seeds of pestilence, and the dark night vapour is bestridden by direful disease and death. In Tersous there was only one resident Englishman, and that was the vice-Consul, who had come there to die like his predecessors. There were no missionaries, not even a Catholic priest, though



plenty of Italian and French Catholics were attached to the various consulates, or employed as merchants and fishers of leeches. The native inhabitants, including a great many from Cyprus, were of all creeds, the greater part being Mahomedans.

During our stay we were the guests of a hospitable native Christian, Signor Michael Saba, a notable merchant of Tersous; but almost all of those whose acquaintance I made, are since dead, our worthy host among the rest. He, poor man, fell a victim to a virulent fever, that swept away hundreds besides himself, within the space of a fortnight. Sad indeed is the change for the worse in the Tersous of the present day, to what that town must have been in the primitive days of the Christian church, when it boasted of its wealth and commerce, and sent forth to the world such accomplished men as the great Apostle St. Paul, who, speaking of his native home, could call it *A city of no mean repute in Cilicia*. Our stay in Tersous did not exceed the time absolutely necessary for the completion of my friend's drawings and surveys; and then, nothing loth, we turned our backs upon the place, crossing the large handsome bridge built over the river, and so speeded on towards Adana. The country lying between Tersous and Adana, was very similar to that which we had traversed between Mersine and the former place, a flat country imperceptibly rising as we advanced. Most of this country was more or less cultivated; and we passed countless Turcoman encampments forming large villages, the whole of whose population was almost exclusively occupied in making those carpets for which they are so much renowned. The great brilliancy of color and duration of these carpets have acquired for them a very just celebrity. The Turcoman dyes, brilliant yellow,



green, and purple (the latter possibly the celebrated Tyrian dye, now lost to the world), are a secret, for the possession of a knowledge of which, the princely Manchester manufacturers would, I imagine, willingly loosen their purse-strings; but no one in the East has hitherto been possessed of sufficient energy and patient inquisitiveness to coax this secret from the breasts of these wild sons of the wilderness. *En route* we passed many old wells which supplied these people and their flocks with water during the summer months. At some of these wells we stopped and begged water for ourselves and horses, which was cheerfully supplied by pretty maidens, who, like Rebecca of old, had come to the well to supply their father's flocks with water.

The town of Adana is of very unprepossessing appearance; its houses being very inferior, both in appearance and dimensions, to those of Tersous. They have, however, the advantage of being in a much healthier situation, though, owing to the inconvenient system of excluding windows, which might overlook the neighbours' court-yards, the houses are insufferably close during the hot months, and have more the resemblance of miserable prisons, with well-secured doors, than of dwelling-houses. The Turks, who are seldom at home during the day, suffer very little inconvenience from the fact above alluded to. They, for the most part, have their little shops on either side of the prodigiously long street that constitutes Adana; and as these are covered in with thatch-work, and are moreover carefully watered by public water-carriers several times a day, the *Dukkans* afford a desirable retreat from the mid-day heat. If their wives and families suffer inconvenience from the sultry closeness of the weather, they are at liberty to lock their doors and resort to any among the number

of pleasant gardens that embellish the suburbs of the town, there to make *farah*, and enjoy themselves till the hour arrives when the *Dukkans* are closed for the night, and the master of the house is expected home ; then all scamper back to receive the hungry Moslems, and if their dinner be not cooked or be displeasing to their taste, to receive in addition a few lashes of the *corbask*, in the use of which they are pretty well skilled in Adana.

The inhabitants are chiefly Moslems—the most intolerably bigoted and ignorantly proud people to be met with in the whole of the Sultan's dominions. No Christian dares to encroach upon their quarter of the town, which is, in fact, the whole of the town ; for the houses of the Christians and Fellahs are scattered around its suburbs, and are in general miserable, mean-looking hovels, tenanted by a wretchedly poverty-stricken people. Though Adana is the head-quarters of the Pasha of that Pashalik, no Europeans, consuls or merchants, reside in the place, from which fact alone arises the unbearable hauteur of the Turks of Adana, who are unaccustomed to mingle with more civilised people, or to bend to the yoke which the rules of official etiquette demand and obtain.

Adana has often been the theatre of frightful convulsions and rebellions. The supreme power of the Sublime Porte has been on more than one occasion set at defiance, and though the results have been terrible, and the honour of the sultan been vindicated in blood, time has worn off the impression, and rising generations have continued to grow up in insolence and insubordination, till the natives are so void of civility to the stranger, that, as a recent author truthfully observes, “it was difficult for any European to traverse

the bazars, especially that part allotted to shoe-makers, without being disgustingly abused, and even spit at." In all other parts, the residence of the Pasha is usually fixed upon as the residence of the consuls and consular agents; as, for instance, Damascus, Jerusalem, and Aleppo, the presence of European authorities being always a wholesome check upon the natives, who have an innate fear of them, which, notwithstanding their deadly hate and bigotry, they are compelled to acknowledge by civil words and acts; and if there is one thing that they fear more than another, it is the facility with which Europeans use their pens. "I will write to Stamboul," is a terrible sentence to the conscience-smitten official. In it he pictures to his imagination an endless array of evils; first, the certainty of answers; then his being involved in a difficult correspondence, which is almost sure to terminate, if he does not speedily amend, in his recall, and possibly still more severe punishment.

Adana had few inducements to hold out to us for remaining. The pasha's beautiful *serrai* was the only object worthy of attention. This had been handsomely constructed, and was picturesquely situated on the banks of that rapid stream which flows through Tersous. Here also was a bridge of very handsome structure, and apparently of very ancient date. The river itself was enlivened by a number of floating flour-mills, the rapid motion of whose wheels threw showers of clear water high up into the air, and gave a busy and stirring appearance to the, in all other respects, dull and monotonous town.

We ventured as far north as Kulek Bughaz—that impregnable mountain-pass which Ibrahim Pasha so strongly fortified, and which modern travellers state, is

now in a ruinous condition. Having, from this great elevation, taken a survey of the immense extent of plains both on the Konia and Adana side, we hastened to descend again, since the mountains were infested with lawless Banditti, and the whole country around was in a very unsettled state, owing to recent warlike demonstrations between Mehemet Ali Pasha and the Sublime Porte.

Reaching the plains, we once more skirted the river, till we arrived at a pathway, that led us, after two days' weary journeyings, to the village of Ayas, on the northern side of the Gulf of Scanderoon; thus avoiding a passage through the territories of the descendants of that notorious robber-chief, Kuchuk Ali Oglu, whose infamous name had spread terror far and wide throughout the Ottoman dominions.

## CHAPTER VI.

## ALEPPO.

HIRING an Arab boat at Ayas, we crossed over the Gulf of Scanderoon, passing close to the lagoons near Ayas, which are very dangerous for navigation, but abounding in fine turtle, such as would meet with a ready and profitable market in London. We landed at Scanderoon, a wretched and deserted village surrounded with pestiferous marshes on all sides. The fever was at that period prevalent, so that our stay was limited to a few hours, during which brief interval horses were engaged to carry us to Antioch, and we partook of some slight refreshment at the residence of my friend Suleiman Bey.

Leaving Scanderoon, or Alesandretta as it is also called, we rode for upwards of an hour through marshes, and hot, humid, unhealthy ground, till arriving at the foot of the Beilan mountains, we commenced their rather abrupt ascent, and after half an hour's scrambling and hard work, reached an elevation from which we caught an uninterrupted view of the sea for many miles on either side, and so pushing forward, in three hours we reached the picturesque, but poverty-stricken village of Beilan, which is situated on either side of a high mountain gorge, and is one of those natural



barriers which, like Kulek Bughaz, afforded a stronghold in times of disturbance and war to several rebel chiefs, who from these fortresses set at defiance the invading armies from the neighbouring plains: but since the death of Kuchuk Ali Oglu, who so long reigned *in terrorem* over the peaceful inhabitants of the plains, this class of people have been entirely exterminated; and Beilan being on the highway from Constantinople to Aleppo, is now inhabited by a civilised though very poor class of Turks and Armenians, whose constant intercourse with Europeans and other merchants has tamed them into honesty, and taught them to respect and fear the prowess of all European nations, more especially the English, of whose fleets they have sometimes caught sight when cruising about the Gulf, and the roar of whose cannon, echoing from mountain to dell, whispered to them not mildly of the power and valour of that surprising nation.

From Beilan to Aleppo our journey occupied two days and a half, and as we travelled with our own tents, etc., we were entirely independant of such wretched accommodation as is usually afforded to travellers in the villages. Aleppo had much the appearance of Damascus when viewed from the distance. The bright foliage of the trees dotted with occasional domes and terraces—the lofty minarets, and the picturesque hill and castle in the centre, all contributed to render the tableau complete; besides which, around as far as the eye could stretch, the barren and desolate appearance of the mountains made Aleppo stand forth a perfect Oasis in a wilderness. On our arrival we were lodged at the Latin convent, but shortly afterwards removed to hired apartments in Jedida, the Christian quarter of the town, where I had the pleasure of

forming the acquaintance of several wealthy native families.

The Aleppines are with truth styled polished; they are innately gentlemen and ladies, from the highest to the lowest; the graceful walk—the well-bred salutation—in short, the whole deportment is such as would well become, and even grace, an English aristocratic *re-union*. During our stay, Signor Fatallah, a wealthy neighbour, who was likewise proprietor of a silk manufactory, married his son to the daughter of an opulent fellow-townsmen; preparations on a grand scale had long been going forward, and, amongst a vast concourse of friends and acquaintances invited to celebrate the nuptials, we also were included. The auspicious moment arrived, and we proceeded to Fatallah's house escorted by a band of native musicians. On arriving at the residence of the bridegroom, we were ushered into a long room in which guests were seated from the door to the upper part according to their rank in life; the chief guests being seated at the head of the divan on either side of the master of the house, others were ranged lower and lower, the poorest guests were close to the doorway, and one or two so poor that they did not even aspire to a place on the divan, but squatted themselves cross-legged on the ground. On the arrival of a fresh guest the master of the house would rise and come forward to receive him; and if, as happened on some occasions, the guest from mock humility would seat himself in a position lower than what his actual rank of precedence entitled him to, an absurd scuffle would ensue, in which the master of the house would endeavour to drag the other higher up into the room, and the guest with many "Stāfer Allahs" (God forbid)

and many false protestations, would pretend reluctantly to yield to the distinction proffered him, and so gain honour in the sight of the assembled multitude. Such scenes brought vividly to my mind our Lord's parable about the meek being exalted; and rendered it clearly evident that this etiquette, so strictly adhered to by the natives of all Syria to this present hour, existed in the time of the Redeemer, and has been practised from the Patriarchs downwards. The very costume—the method of salutation—the seats arranged methodically for the guests, all helped to contribute not a little in forcibly recalling to mind several portions of Scripture often read with pleasure in my childhood.

After we had arrived and taken our seats, the musicians struck up some popular and lively Arabic air familiar to the ears of us Syrians, as connected with many pleasant recollections of like spectacles and occasions. Numberless servants were busily occupied in handing to the guests sherbet, pipes, narghilies, and a large assortment of candied and other sweetmeats. As the visitors continued rapidly arriving they were sprinkled by the bridesman with essences, and the scene in the court-yard outside the reception-room, assumed a more animated appearance. Groups of young men in gaily-coloured and picturesque coats, were seated in circles each separate circle possessing a *kānūn* player of its own, emulous to surpass the notes of his neighbour. Occasionally one or two men from each circle would stand up and go through the wild but elegant figures of the Bedouin dances, whilst groups of pretty and timid girls, collected in knots round the walls of the house, watched with the deepest interest the wrestling matches of their lovers or brothers, and joined loudly in the plaudits which crowned a successful competitor with the

full-blown honours of championship. As the evening advanced, their hilarity increased; strings of servants with heavily-laden trays were seen occasionally crossing the court-yard, bringing quantities of confectionery and other gifts of the friends and relations of the bridegroom, for it is always expected that every one invited will contribute in some small way to set up the young couple in life. To this intent the presents comprise all sorts of articles, such as coffee, sugar, live fowls, wheat, handkerchiefs, caps, scarfs, sweetmeats, tobacco, etc. Every one gives his mite; it costs the donor only a trifle, but in the mass very materially assists the newly married pair. This custom of friends sending presents is also adopted upon the accouchement of a lady; her friends, the ensuing week, send her various small presents on trays, such as a couple of roasted chickens, or some delicate tit-bit, well suited to the palate of an invalid. These small civilities are productive of much good will, and really cost nothing, but I wonder what any fashionable lady in London would say, if a friend, under similar circumstances, volunteered to send her a dish of roast fowls. I understand that among the middle and lower classes in England such presents are not unfrequent, though generally in cases not entirely above the reach of want; whereas, with us in Syria, the custom is observed by all classes alike, as a mark of regard and delicate attention.

But to return to the gay nuptials of our friend; Fatallah's son, the bridegroom, was nowhere visible, neither were there any signs of the fair bride or her attendant nymphs. Towards evening, however, the Greek bishop, marshalled in by three or four priests, made his appearance, and as soon as his reverence had been saluted and seated himself, servants appeared

with diminutive round tables, which they set before the guests, and covering them with heavily-laden trays, removed the napkins, and displayed to the hungry multitude the very choice collection of viands that had been cooked for the nuptial dinner.

Richly flavoured soups, aromatic dishes of minced meat, gravies and numerous other delicacies, both sweet and sour, were all plentifully supplied; the first course consisting chiefly of light dishes, in which vegetables and curdled cream figured in abundance; the second, comprising various kinds of meat; the whole repast terminating with one vast pillaf, and kids and lambs roasted whole, and stuffed with pistachio nuts, currants and spices. Before commencing dinner, a small glass of arraki\* was handed round to the guests; afterwards, an abundant supply of wine of Lebanon was at hand for those who wished to partake of it.

Whilst this festivity was going forward indoors, those outside were not one whit behind in enjoyment. Sheep, cooked whole, were set before the musicians and singers; also huge platters of pillaf, which made two men stagger under their weight. At the conclusion of dinner, all the guests were served with basins and ewers of water, and very liberally besprinkled with rose and orange-flower water.

During the repast, the bridegroom, who had entered the room very meanly clad, was conducted by young men, his companions, into an adjoining apartment, and there having been shaved and washed, then stripped of his beggarly rags, he was clothed in splendid bridal attire and led back into the presence of the guests. Here he passed round from one to the other, humbly taking their hands and kissing them, commencing with the

\* Spirit, made of raisins and aniseed distilled.



bishops and priests, until he had completed the circle ; he then received the blessing ; after which, he was permitted to seat himself upon a low chair placed in the centre of the room, and there, with his head hanging down from feelings of bashfulness, the young man awaited the arrival of the propitious hour. After some little delay, the distant sound of darbekirs and firing off of muskets warned the assembly that the bride had quitted her home for the last time, and was now being escorted with all the pride of Eastern pomp through the streets to the residence of her destined husband. No sooner did the shouts and acclamations reach the ears of the young men congregated in the court-yards, than these, as though inspired by martial music, leapt up from the ground, and seizing upon their fire-arms, rushed out into the streets, accompanied by drums and other instruments, to be in readiness to receive the bride's escort, and exchange with them *feux de joie* of musketry.

Some servants of the house now carried into the reception-room a common low table, which was speedily covered with snow-white drapery, and on which were placed the bishop's mitre, prayer-books, chalices, censers, etc., all to be in readiness for the consecration of the nuptials. The bishop and attendant priests were speedily arrayed in clerical costumes ; two small crowns of olive branches richly gilt and decorated with flowers were placed upon the table ; and these arrangements had scarcely been completed, when the bride was ushered in by her attendant nymphs, followed by a concourse of friends and relations, having previously thrown some yeast upon the outer door of the house, and broken a pomegranate over it.

The bride was covered from head to foot in a long, loose veil, white as snow ; but of sufficiently thin texture to admit of her features being partly distinguish-

able, and to show that over her under garments, which were composed of richly embroidered silks and satins, she was literally bespangled with costly gems; large festoons of gold coins encircling her head, and falling over her shoulders, reached to the ground.

The priests now lighted the candles placed on the temporary altar\*; deacons with censers in their hands went the round of the room, sprinkling benedictions on all around; the bride and bridegroom were duly arranged before the bishops and priests—a bridesman and a bridesmaid stood behind, their right hands resting on the crowns which had now been placed on the heads of the young couple about to be married; the chaunt commenced, and the serious part of the ceremony began. As the nuptials progressed, the bridegroom and bride three times exchanged crowns; then the rings were placed upon the fingers of both, and the bishop made them drink out of the same cup of wine; once did they make the circuit of the altar-table; and then amidst a shower of small silver coins, confectionary, and flowers, which fell like heavy rain all around, the bishop gave his blessing; and the young couple were bound by indissoluble ties from that moment forward, throughout life, as man and wife. The bride was shortly after led away into an antechamber, where she was partly relieved of her many cumbrous veils, and where such of the friends of the family as desired, had a fair opportunity of admiring her pretty face. She then stepped forth and kissed the hands of male intruders, in token of her humble submission to one of their sex from that day forward.†

\* Every marriage-guest brings a candle, which he is obliged to light.

† Sometimes the marriage ceremony is performed at home, sometimes in the church.

The latter part of the evening was passed much in the same way as the earlier part of the day had been; with music, songs, and dancing. What added much to the general effect, was the numerous variegated lamps and brilliant torches, that cast a light upon and added greatly to the picturesque effect of the various costumes; for by this time many of the European residents were present, in some instances accompanied by their ladies, and some of the military and other officers in the government service, dressed in their respective uniforms. It was near upon midnight when we withdrew, but the festivities were kept up till daybreak; and then the wedding-feast terminated, the gaieties of which had been sustained with hardly any intermission throughout the three preceding days.

Such is the general custom amongst our people; and even the poorest man on such joyful occasions, as they occur only once in a lifetime, will spend his last piastre in endeavours to make the nuptial ceremony as brilliant an affair as he can. When a widower or widow is married, all these rejoicings are abandoned—the simple nuptial ceremony, in the presence of a few relatives, is all that is expected, or in fact deemed decorous; and this arises from a very honorable notion, that the memory of a deceased partner should be held in religious esteem; so as to prevent the outraging the feelings of their relatives upon the occasion of entering a second time into that estate of conjugal blessedness, by any display or great rejoicing: indeed a man or a woman is supposed to marry a second time purely from motives of mutual advantage; to be a helpmate to each other, especially in the case of a man having had a family by his first wife, in which case, the children are often unavoidably neglected, as the husband's occupations

preclude the possibility of his devoting much time or thought to their welfare. A stepmother in Syria is not a proverb of harshness; stepmothers in that country, in direct contrariety to what is believed to be the case in Europe, are affectionate and kind to their step-children, and even in such rare instances as that of a man marrying again, when his first wife's children are already nearly grown up, even then perfect harmony reigns between the different members of the family; for filial respect is so powerfully inculcated in a young Syrian's breast, that however young the stepmother may be, she is always looked up to and respected as the wife of a father; and with regard to the wife herself, the rule acts the same, only *vice versa*, the children are regarded as the children of her husband; and however many children a second wife may have, the first one's always claim the precedence. It is indispensable amongst all Syrian families that every member should know and keep his or her respective place, and quarrels on this score are seldom, if ever, known.

We remained long enough in Aleppo to become familiar with all its quarters, Christian, Jewish, and European; the latter reside principally at Kittab, a pleasant little hamlet of neatly constructed houses, which dates after the period of the shocking earthquake in 1822—an event which so alarmed the populace that for many weeks afterwards they thought themselves insecure within the walls of the city, many of the massive houses, though built upon arches, having given way, carrying everything before them, and crushing alike inmates and passers-by in the streets. Aleppo is perhaps the most fashionable town in the East, not even excepting Damascus. The fashions change there as often almost as they do in Paris, and

all the young ladies are as particular about their dress as the more aristocratic belles in the North; the result of all this is that an Aleppine lady proves usually an expensive wife; but I must acknowledge that their extreme neatness, the snowy-white veils, and gaily-coloured tunics, add much to the picturesque appearance of the gardens on festive days, when the whole population throngs these favourite places of resort as much for air and exercise as from a wish to shew themselves, as it is only on this day many of them have an opportunity of escaping from the narrow and confined streets of the city.

“Shamm al Hawa,” is a favourite expression of Aleppines, for they dearly love the open country and delight to rove amongst trees and flowers; Aleppo is a country I should have great hopes for with regard to the success of missionary labour. The Aleppines are too courteous to mock at or hold in derision the tenets of any man, or to interrupt a man when he speaks, nor indeed to listen inattentively. Many amongst them are naturally intelligent: and did any schools or institutions exist from which their families might derive any clear and indisputable benefit—education for their children—instruction in any arts or sciences—physic and medical attendance for the sick and poverty-stricken (they are by no means an ungrateful people), their attention would most assuredly be arrested by such attentions to their own and their townsmen’s wants, and they would be brought to reflect that such kind benefactors must be trustworthy people, and people that love truth.

The last Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society gives the population of Aleppo to be 90,000 souls, of which number 19,000 are said to be Christians



of various denominations, and yet there was only one Protestant missionary on the spot; the Rev. Mr. Benton having been obliged to revisit America for the benefit of his health. When it is considered that at Antab, a considerable town only a day distant from Aleppo, the efforts of a single missionary, the Rev. Dr. Smith, of the American mission, have been crowned with unprecedented success, and that chiefly amongst the Armenians, of whom there are also numbers established in Aleppo, it cannot but be regretted that so favourable a field should be neglected. The fact of this missionary being also a physician is another proof in support of what I shall endeavour to prove in a subsequent chapter, namely, the advantages derivable from the wide establishment of Medical Missions, a subject which I trust, under the Almighty blessing, will attract the attention of the Protestant inhabitants of Great Britain.

Few towns in the East can rival Aleppo in a commercial sense. Every resident is more or less of a speculator; and thousands have lost and gained a fortune in the failures or successes of mercantile speculations. Even the women are imbued with this spirit of enterprise; and the female broker is no inconsiderable person in a merchant's appreciation. She penetrates into the restricted precincts of the harem, and displays, to the admiring gaze of its fair secluded inmates, jewels and tinselled fineries, such as would barely merit a moment's pause or attention in the over-crowded bazaars, but when presented by themselves prove an inducement to purchase; and this is a means of no small profit, above all to the poorer class of speculators who are obliged to restrict their purchases to their very limited means. Even children hawk about minor

commodities, and little urchins who have barely a rag to cover their nudity, will offer to the stranger carefully hoarded up bits of glass and old coins picked up in some of the most deserted and ruinous portions of the city, hoping that amongst them a valuable antique may invite his attention.

We left Aleppo after a prolonged stay, and mounting our horses joined a caravan loaded with produce for the supply of the Antioch market. The first few hours, after leaving Aleppo, our road lay over a rocky pathway difficult to ride over, bleak and monotonous in the extreme; but soon the glorious plains of the Amuk spreading before us as far as the eye could reach, burst like a splendid panorama on our gaze. We rapidly descended to their level, and the remainder of our first day's journeying was over a flat country, whose natural prolific soil, interspersed, as it was at short distances, with small tributary streams, would have been a sight to gladden the heart of any emigrant who should seek for rich pasturages for his cattle—abundant harvest of wheat and barley—rich orchards and valuable plantations.

All these doubtless once existed at a time when the ruined cities, portions of whose past grandeur still remain to gratify the curious antiquarian, were in their zenith; indeed tradition reports the whole of this extensive plain (which it took us two days' hard riding to traverse), at its narrowest breadth, to have been once an extensive forest, in some parts almost impenetrable. Now there is barely a tree to be seen, immense pasturages and fields stretch on every side, and numbers of horses, cattle, and sheep, browse on the luxuriant herbage. We arrived on the third day at the Gessir il Haded, or iron bridge, where we first crossed the Orontes, and

after skirting the river for a few minutes, struck off on a wide pathway leading over a mountainous country, richly dotted with trees, and verdant with wild thyme and lavender. Small herds of gazelles, startled from their resting-places by the echo of our horses' tramp, darted across our pathway, and sought refuge on the further side of the many lofty hills that now surrounded us. The Orontes, in its meandering course, occasionally took a sweep and glided close under our elevated pathway; by and bye we closed in with the river; myriads of water-fowl and other game flew over our heads. There was a stately old ruined castle, on a bleak isolated hill; we passed under its deserted battlements, and in ten minutes afterwards were riding through the streets of the once famed city of Antioch.

## CHAPTER VII.

## ANTIOCH AND LATTAKIA.

IN Antioch our stay was, much to our regret, comparatively short; for who would willingly quit so fair a spot—a perfect Paradise, and rich in the fairest gifts of nature? A healthy climate, a cloudless sky, luxuriant fruits and flowers, meadows and pasturages, high hills and valleys; the mountain and the plain bespangled with trees, the wild myrtle and other fragrant shrubs, intersected by a glorious river; the earth producing nourishment for droves upon droves of cattle, and domestic as well as wild fowl; the river abounding in eels, and the distant sea furnishing delicious fish of fifty varieties. What more could mortal man on earth desire? All these can Antioch boast of, besides the many pleasant reminiscences connected with the spot. Its primitive Christian Church, the great success that crowned the early efforts of those two devout and indefatigable apostles, Paul and Barnabas;—the city, the birth-place of St. Luke, the beloved physician, where originated the name of that faith, which is our pride, our boast, and the source of all our hope; these are ties which render Antioch, in the devout Christian's estimation, second only to Jerusalem. When we were at Antioch many parts of the once famous walls of the city were still in perfect condition, a wonderful proof of the skill and persevering labours of those brave but alas

unsuccessful men who strove permanently to plant the cross in the countries where it had first been raised, and had once triumphantly flourished. Though through so many succeeding generations, the city has been subjected to every imaginable disaster, fire, invasion, revolt, and the terrible effects of violent earthquakes, yet nature still smiles upon the surrounding country as brightly as ever she shone in the zenith of her city's glory. Its palaces and other magnificent buildings, the handiwork of mortal man, had, with man, all crumbled away to dust. Its millions of inhabitants have dwindled down to some few thousands, and in this respect the wreck is complete; but the fairness of the morning, and the freshness of the breeze, the beauty of the prospect, the flowers, and fruits, and trees, these continue the same as in the wealthiest era of the Seleucidæ. Man and man's triumphant domes are nowhere to be seen; a few crazily built houses, and a few straggling inhabitants, are all that now constitute the modern town of Antakia.

Yet, notwithstanding all this, the vast extent of land in the neighbourhood of Antioch which is devoted solely to the cultivation of mulberry-trees, and the great space of still uncultivated ground which might be devoted to a like purpose, gives ample assurance that, in the one article of silk alone, an immense revenue might be derived, and a very large population be maintained in easy, if not affluent, circumstances. As matters stand at the present day, the silk produced yields no inconsiderable revenue; but the plantations are the exclusive property of a few independent proprietors, who, themselves reaping more than a lion's share, leave to the great herd of the inhabitants a paltry, miserable pittance, which can scarcely find them



the very barest necessities of life, although Antioch is acknowledged to be perhaps the cheapest place in the known world.

Whilst at Antioch, we visited the water-mills now occupying the site of the once celebrated groves of Daphne, and thence returning, took horses and proceeded to Suedia over the selfsame ground once familiar to Paul and Barnabas, when those two apostles, like ourselves, went down to Seleucia to take shipping from thence. The whole space intervening between Antioch and Suedia, a distance of nearly twenty miles, is occupied by luxuriant mulberry plantations and orchards of delicious fruit-trees; fruits that are peculiar to this neighbourhood having been introduced and cultivated with great care, through a series of many years, by a philanthropic English gentleman, who distributed cuttings and grafts throughout the district.

At Suedia we remained two days, the guests of this hospitable gentleman, visiting in that interval—the site where stood the pillar of Simeon Stylites,—the delightful country seats of Mr. Barker at Bitias and Huderbey, and lastly, the splendid ruined tunnel and aqueduct, besides other remains of the once wealthy Seleucia. This done, we hired an Arab felucca, which, sailing out of the Orontes and crossing the Gulf of Antioch in the short space of seven hours, carried us over to Lattakia, the ancient Laodicea.

Arrived at Lattakia, we became the guests of the hospitable brothers Elias. Signor Mosi Elias is the British vice-consul at that port; and seldom have I had the happiness of meeting with a more worthy man; but, in fact, the whole of his family are distinguished for their great courtesy and hospitality to all strangers. This eulogy may fairly be extended to all the native agents

established along the sea-coast of Syria; although, unfortunately, their humble efforts are not always duly appreciated. English gentlemen, accustomed to every comfort and luxury that wealth can command, little imagine the expense and trouble incurred by many of the humble Syrian agents in their efforts to afford hospitality to British travellers. Receiving no salary, and yet compelled to maintain a certain position to support the dignity of office, the means in their power must necessarily be limited; but as far as house-room goes—a bed, a dinner, breakfast, and supper, according to their limited means; these are always cheerfully offered to the traveller; and the poor consular agent, who has almost insuperable difficulties to contend with, so as to enable him to impress the local authorities with a due sense of the importance and respectability of his office, is glad to avail himself of the opportunity of having an Englishman as guest under his roof, to convince the neighbours and his fellow-townsmen of his influence with the British. I have known instances where a poor consular agent has even parted with some valuable family relic, so as to enable him to afford a hearty welcome to some Englishman of distinction; while, perhaps, the only return he has met with, was, to be treated with supreme contempt and derision, even to his face; or to have his name bandied about to the world in some gaudily bound book of travels, in which authors have seen fit to make sport of men, who, in all probability, sacrificed a night's rest and comfort to contribute both towards them in a strange land.

While on this subject, I may record one instance which came to my knowledge, and which was really too scandalous not to be made known.

A party of travellers, for I cannot style them gentle-

men, five or six in number, were travelling through Syria and Palestine, accompanied by a retinue of servants with tents, baggage, and every luxury and comfort that money could command. Arriving at one of the seaport towns, where dwelt an English agent (a good old man, who was a Syrian by birth), they pitched their tents outside of the town, and sending their insolent dragoman to the agent, informed him that it was their intention to remain a couple of days in that neighbourhood, and commanded him to procure them guides to shew them over the town and its vicinity, so that they might see all that was worth being seen. To this, the agent readily assented; and "on hospitable thoughts intent," dressed himself for the occasion, and preceded by his *cawass* went to the travellers' tents to pay his respects, and to offer them any little services in his power. Finding that they required no further aid, he then told them, that although they had placed the possibility of being useful to them beyond his reach, he trusted that they would not wholly deprive him of the pleasure of their company; and invited them to dine at his house at an early hour the next day. This invitation the travellers, who had barely treated the old man with civility, thought proper to accept, and the next day they duly made their appearance.

Meanwhile, the poor consul, whose stock of crockery was rather scant, and whose knives and forks mustered but a meagre shew, endeavoured by buying or borrowing, to make things as tidy and complete as he possibly could; but it often happens, that in such small villages as that in which the agent resided, and where European vessels seldom resort, European merchandize is very rare; and such a thing as a plated spoon, or a knife and fork, is not to be met with for love or money.

This was precisely the case in the instance before us; and the poor agent was put to his wit's end in discovering, that after every effort, his stock of knives still fell short of the necessary compliment by a knife. In this dilemma, he was quite at a nonplus what to do; till finally, he resolved to throw himself upon the known courtesy of an Englishman, and explain exactly how matters stood; begging of the guests on their arrival to let their servants fetch from their own tents such implements for table use as were indispensably requisite for the accommodation of all.

No sooner, however, had the poor agent explained the state of affairs by means of the interpreter, than the guests, one and all, fell into a violent passion, and asked the consul how he had dared to insult them by asking them to dinner when he was not in a position to treat them as become persons of their rank and distinction. Saying this, they swept from the room in a towering passion, leaving the poor agent lost in amazement how to account for such conduct from persons who styled themselves English gentlemen, and overcome with shame and vexation that his neighbours should have been witness to such an outrage.

This anecdote requires no comment. Happily such instances of gross misconduct are of rare occurrence, but it plainly exemplifies the absurd system followed by government in placing native agents all over Syria and Turkey, to whom they do not afford means of maintaining a position which ought to command respect.

The present system of native agencies is altogether a mistake; they should be entrusted only to those who have previously had a European education. Most of those now employed have been reared in dread of

the very name of the *local powers*, and are inefficient in cases of controversy between subjects of two nations.

I may here be permitted to deviate a little from the subject of Lattakia and my travels, to make a few remarks on the uses and abuses of the protection-system so largely practised all over Syria and Turkey.

The abuses of the system are very great; this is much to be regretted, because in the main the arrangements existing between the Ottoman government and European powers with regard to this particular subject, viz., that of the privileges enjoyed by Europeans to protect a limited number of rayahs actually in the service of consuls, merchants, and others, is a very great boon to Europeans. Were it not for this privilege, Europeans residing in Syria would find it a very difficult matter to procure good and efficient servants.

In a country like Syria, where every creature-comfort or necessary is extremely cheap, the lower orders, who are generally of an indolent disposition, would much prefer remaining idle for one-half of the year to engaging in any occupation which might make it incumbent on them to go through a certain portion of daily labour; and this they can afford to do, as their habits are frugal, and the amount gained in one day by a labourer will suffice to support himself and family for three days. This applies equally to the fellah or peasant employed in cultivation. His portion of the silk harvest is sufficient to maintain him till the wheat crop is gathered in, when he earns with his scythe a sufficiency to maintain him in idleness till the olive and grape harvests arrive, and then he is either paid in cash or allowed a certain quantity of wheat, oil, wine, aqua



vita, *dibs*, raisins, etc., as recompense for his labour. Of this store he lays by a sufficiency for the winter; the silk and the surplus of the wheat, etc., he either sells or barter for other household requisites, such as clothing, butter and charcoal. He brings his own fuel from the mountains, and, if he be at all a careful manager, can keep a mule of his own to carry goods and passengers to and from the nearest towns and villages. Thus, with a very small amount of labour, the peasant of Syria can afford to have an idle time of it, were he not in terror of government taxes; for although the system of taxation is fairly and justly arranged, and in reality the sums levied are small in proportion to the income, still there are understrappers, besides their own Christian Nazir and Sheikhs, who peculate to a large extent under the plea of moneys required for government levies. This induces the peasant gladly to embrace any opportunity that may offer of entering into the service of a Frank; for from the hour of his employment he is, to all intents and purposes, the subject of another power. He is exempt from taxation, and the Nazirs and Sheikhs durst not intrude themselves upon the privacy of his household, under penalty of being at loggerheads with the consuls and pashas, and possibly of being exposed to the ignominy of the bastinado.

Now the very possession of this power to protect is sufficient to raise an Englishman much in the estimation of the Turks, and other natives of Syria; and were this privilege used with moderation, and not abused, it would become, as I have already stated, a boon to Europeans.

The great misfortune is, that there is no existing line of distinction which might separate the herd of Syro-

European inhabitants, from those really and virtually Europeans by birth and education. These two distinct classes are as separated from each other as light is from darkness, yet unfortunately possessing like powers and like privileges, the latter class, who fill the posts of consuls, merchants, clerks, missionaries, *doctors*, and a few tradesmen, being strictly gentlemen in their principles.

The former class consists of men, whose paternal ancestors were European, and who scrupulously claim their rights as such. Most of them have intermarried amongst their own peculiar class, so as to form a distinct and new race of inhabitants in Syria. They have inherited from their fathers, in a lineal descent, their names, nationality, and wealth, and in many instances their consular dignity. Some few have inherited the consulates without proportionate means to support the dignity, and the mass of this class being linked together by marriage ties, almost every man is grandfather, uncle, cousin, nephew, father, brother, or son, or brother-in-law to his next-door neighbour. It is with this latter class in particular that the abuse of the protection system prevails to an alarming extent.

There are in Syria few or none of that troublesome class of Europeans that so infest Constantinople, Smyrna, and Alexandria. I allude to political and other refugees: these find no occupation or encouragement in Syria, where there are no established gambling-houses, or other dens to which they can resort.

To be classed as a European merchant in Syria, requires no very great outlay of capital; take, for example, the following instance:—

Messrs. A— and Co., a wealthy English firm, established at Beyrout or in Aleppo, receive annually from three to four thousand bales of British manufactured

goods, and they ship exports to an equally large amount. They necessarily require the services of not only household servants, but cashiers, native writers, and warehousemen. These men are very properly admitted to the privilege of temporarily enjoying the protection of a British subject.

Perhaps the next-door neighbour to these gentlemen is a Mr. B— who is also styled a merchant, because once, or perhaps twice in a twelvemonth, he goes through the form of receiving a solitary bale of goods; this bale, in all probability, being sent through his hands as a blind, by some wealthier relative, to impress the local authorities with an idea of his wealth, and to enable him to establish his claim to rank as a merchant. This man pretends to find occupation for as many people as the solid English house does, and every man in his employment, and under his protection (perhaps the cook only excepted) is a man of substance. It would be a problem hard to solve by any uninitiated traveller or stranger how to account for this; how this man, who is notoriously poor, and whose miserable single bale of manufactures would barely counter-balance the expenditure of his household for a single week, can manage to support so vast a retinue, find occupation for so many people, and keep up such an appearance of state; but the secret lies in a nut-shell. In his case *the master is the hireling of the servant*. His warehouseman alone (who drives a thriving trade in the wealthiest bazaar) pays him perhaps sixty pounds sterling per annum, to enjoy the privilege of European protection; so that at this rate, and as the list of protected is a long one, the Syro-European merchant is in the receipt of an excellent income; he keeps his horses and gives grand entertainments; but as far as conscience or honesty goes,

these are two hard words not to be met with in his vocabulary.

This is *infamous* ! But even this is a trifle in comparison to what is done by such as are invested with authority as consuls. These have a long list of protected, and the consular secretary, and consular interpreter has each his own peculiar protégées; and so the number goes on gradually downwards, until we arrive at the consular *cawass*; and even he can boast of one or more on his list ! Thus, in lieu of a consul only protecting a *dozen or fourteen* individuals (which is about treble the number he is, strictly speaking, allowed), he, in fact, is the indirect means of affording protection to many *scores* of individuals; each one of whom is a dead loss to the treasury of the local government, and a burthen to his poorer and less fortunate brethren; and this because the exact amount of any given tax to be collected being beforehand fixed by the government, the Nazirs and Sheikhs allot to each man of the village his own portion; and what should have fallen on the shoulders of the exempted or protected man, is obliged to be made good by those rayahs who are subjected to the tax.

But this is not all: the subordinate officers in some of the British Consulates are guilty of equally gross offences. The consuls are apt to be wheedled over by the cunning dragoman and chancellor, so completely, that at last they place a blind and implicit faith in their every word or suggestion, and will on no consideration listen to complaints often too justly founded against these upstart Jacks in office.

An instance of this happened to myself; but I will, from delicacy to the high official functionary mixed up with it omit names of places and persons. A native

Prince was anxious to call upon one of the British authorities, but being unacquainted with the English language, he desired me to accompany him; not but that the authority in question was furnished with an interpreter, but simply, because the Prince wished, for privacy's sake, that the matter of conversation should be confined to ourselves, without any prying ears being witness to the interview. Arriving at the office, we were shewn in; but the interpreter ushering the Prince into one apartment, shewed me into another. I was quite amazed at this strange proceeding; but as the dragoman immediately left the room, I could only conjecture that it was some sly trick of his own, or a wish to be possessed of information regarding the Prince. Whichever motive it might have been, the visit terminated without my seeing the official. On a subsequent occasion, however, I alluded to the matter; the dragoman was taxed with it; but stoutly denied having done anything of the kind, declaring, that I of my own accord had gone into another room. I brought the Prince's testimony to prove how the man had slighted me; but notwithstanding all this, that lying interpreter had gained such influence with this high official, that our testimony was discarded, and he was believed.

After this long digression from the subject, for which I beg the reader's kind forgiveness, I now resume the thread of my narrative.

The staple produce of Lattakia is wheat, silk, and tobacco; of these, the latter is considered to be the finest and most odoriferous in the world; and the *aboo reah*, though many attempts have been made to introduce it into other parts of Syria, will grow nowhere else save at Jabaliy, a small seaport town about three hours to the southward of Lattakia, and where



one of the Sultans, who had abdicated his throne and withdrawn himself from the world, built a magnificent mosque, and some other public edifices, the ruins of many of which are still to be seen, and which render "Sultan Ibrahim," as Jabaliy is from these circumstances styled, an object of interest to travellers.

Whilst at Lattakia a messenger arrived with dispatches, summoning us to Beyrout. On our arrival there, we found the combined Austrian, Turkish, and English fleets anchored before the town, to compel the Egyptians to evacuate Syria, and at the invitation of my friend, Ahmed Bey, I paid him a visit on board of the Turkish Admiral's vessel, who despatched me on a secret mission to the mountains; whilst there I was filled with consternation by hearing a report that Ibrahim Pasha, having obtained intelligence of my movements, had set a price upon my head. I immediately burnt all my papers, changed my dress, and travelled in disguise of a beggar, expecting every moment to be recognised and beheaded. At last I reached a village called Arrayah, near the road to Damascus; here I had some relations, and I immediately went to them for shelter.

After I had been there a few days, the news of it reached the governor, and he immediately sent two *cawass* to arrest me; but the servant of my friend having received information that I was being pursued, hid me in the harem apartments, which are accessible to none but the head of the family, a priest, or a physician; here I was secreted, and on their arrival, they even sent in a priest to the harem to ascertain if I was there, but the vigilance of my protectors evaded them even in this, and I was let down from the window in a basket into the garden, from whence I escaped to a cave close by

till midnight ; I then made my way back to my relations, who told me of the close search the *cawass* had made for me, and the disappointment they experienced at not finding me.

A few days after this an English traveller passed through the place, and understanding a little of his language, I offered my services to accompany him to Beyrout, under the title of *tuwjaman*, and according to the laws of Turkey, I no sooner joined him than I was under British protection ; by this means I reached Beyrout in safety ; and finding that the Capitan Pasha had gone to Acre, I joined the English forces, and then, for the first time in my life, witnessed the consummate skill and accuracy with which the troops carried on the warfare.

Nothing could have been more ingenious than the plan of attack. The Turkish troops, arriving in steamers and vessels of war, were during the night, with the utmost precaution, transhipped to the British vessel, and next morning, those vessels supposed by the forces on shore to carry troops, were towed down by the "Geyser" and other steamers towards Dog River, which occasioned the whole of the Egyptian forces to evacuate the town, and take up a strong position in the neighbourhood of the Dog River. Here they were mowed down by the heavy batteries of the frigates, whilst the transhipped troops landed and took unmolested possession of the town. And so the victory was won.

I remained with the army several weeks, and assisted in the operations against the Egyptians, and after the conclusion of the peace proceeded, accompanied by an English official and a numerous body of attendants, to Tripoli, or as we call it, Trablous, the

beautiful orange garden of the world. People talk so much about St. Michael oranges; for my part I have never seen any orange in the world whose flavor and scent could equal that of Trablous; besides which they are so plentiful and cheap, that although all the sea coasts, and the interior of Syria and Palestine, and even parts of Asia Minor are supplied with boat-loads and camel-loads of oranges from Tripoli, there is still abundance left to cause them to be as cheap as well as a delicious luxury. Our duty here, as elsewhere, was to see that the people of the place and the neighbourhood were well governed—to hear complaints and bring them in a proper form before the local authorities, to the end that injured parties might obtain redress—and to enquire into and make notes of everything that occurred.

The natives had christened my friend "Abu Rish," which being literally translated, means "the father of a feather;" they gave him this name because he always sported a large feather in his cocked hat, which was seldom set aside in his journeyings. I have no doubt but that many of the ignorant and half wild natives of some of the villages that we passed through looked upon this hat and feathers in something the same light as the native of the savage island regarded that of Captain Cook, considering it to be a very strangely formed head, an abnormal amalgamation of the cock with the man.

We were lodged at Tripoli, with the Signor Catsoflis, the British vice-consul, at whose house we experienced much hospitality. Signor Catsoflis, and his brother, the Austrian vice-consul, are twins, and so strong is the resemblance between them that it is barely possible for a stranger to distinguish the one from the other when apart. The wife of Mr. Catsoflis, the Austrian

vice-consul, is the sister of Mr. Elias, the vice-consul at Lattakia. I never before, or since, have set eyes on any woman that could rival her in beauty, and her disposition was as sweet as her face was lovely. This lady made a complaint to me on behalf of a fellow Christian, a poor peasant from the mountains, who accustomed to rove about free, and in such dress as his fancy dictated, amongst his own villagers, unwittingly made his appearance in the streets of Tripoli, dressed in a light robe of a greenish color, which excited the wrath and indignation of some fanatics, who, saying that none but descendants from the prophet could be permitted to wear any colour approaching to green, tore the garment from the poor fellow's back, beat and otherwise shamefully ill-treated him ; this was the instance of the complaint. "And now," said the fair advocate, addressing herself to me, "let me see if you and your friend are really possessed of such influence and authority as you vaunt yourselves of, by causing the wrongs of this poor unoffending man to be redressed." If any thing could have spurred me to the deed, it was certainly being thus taunted by one of the handsomest women in the world. I immediately agreed to comply with her wishes, and girding on my sword, took the Cawass, and proceeded direct to Yusuf Pacha. Before going, however, I had donned a pair of Wellington boots that an European friend had lent me, and the brilliant emerald green of whose tops must have inspired the gaping Moslems in the streets with the utmost envy and rage.

I entered into the presence of the governor without even announcing myself, an abrupt proceeding which not a little disconcerted His Excellency, who began anxiously to question me, hoping that I was the bearer of good, not of unfavourable, news. I stated the case

to the governor, and he replied very civilly, that he regretted that it did not come within his jurisdiction, being purely a question of creed. The Cadi, however, being summoned to the divan, tried to shuffle out of the matter as best he could; he said it was decidedly against the law of the prophet, and that the aggressor merited the punishment. I asked him whether this law was intended to bear only upon certain individuals, or upon all. The Cadi replied, upon all; then, said I, if such be the case, you had better take me and give me a bastinadoing, for as you see, pointing to my boots, nothing can be a brighter green than those are; this completely confounded the Cadi. I insisted on having the men bastinadoed on the very spot where the outrage had been committed. British vessels of war were still cruising about in the neighbourhood; the fall of Acre was still fresh in the memory of the Moslems; the consequence was, that after some little demur, I carried the day, and the men were punished as I had wished and directed. This event occasioned immense sensation amongst the inhabitants, and impressed them with a due notion of the influence and power of the British nation, tending to keep the more fanatical within bounds, since no rank, or grade, or riches, could protect them from punishment if they once gave offence to Europeans.

From Tripoli we proceeded to visit the famous cedars of Lebanon. There are at present eleven of these celebrated trees, seven of which are supposed to have existed from the time of the building of Solomon's temple. I need scarcely inform you, my readers, how conspicuously these trees have figured in Biblical metaphors. The prophet Ezekiel speaks in glowing terms of their



beauty. Again, the prophet Isaiah seems in a remarkable manner to predict their extinction, "The rest of the trees of this forest shall be few that a child may write them." How literally has this prophecy been fulfilled!

On my last visit to Syria I found the priest, to whom the charge of these trees is committed, had planted a number of young shoots, though with what success I have not yet heard. A church has also been built on the spot. The Arabs believe they were planted by the hands of the Almighty himself, and there are innumerable traditions connected with these trees, which I hope to give an account of in a future work. One of these is of so great diameter, that a monk actually hollowed it out and formed a sort of room in which he took up his abode. The trunks are covered with names of travellers, many of a very old date cut out with the knife.

From the cedars we proceeded to the wonderful ruins of Baalbec; but these have been often and truthfully described by various travellers. At last we reached Damascus, and I was pleased beyond measure to meet my connexions and acquaintances there. At this time several British officers were travelling over Syria in all directions on diplomatic missions. These endeavoured to ascertain the exact capabilities of every town and village, as regards the number of men that could bear arms; the number of cattle, horses, etc.; the arms and quantity of ammunition, and the proportion that the Moslem population bore to the Christians. Of these gallant officers, one was sent to Damascus, and whilst residing there, he was very much captivated by the beauty of the Moslem ladies. On first arriving, this gay Lothario was well received by the grey-bearded authorities; but

soon he lost caste; reports and complaints were of every-day occurrence; this white stranger would persist in making love to the Moslem ladies, and the Moslem girls would persist in making love to him. This was a dreadful state of affairs; but this was not all, for even the old Armenian patriarch was roused into wrath by discovering that a timid little Armenian girl was actually head over ears in love with the feather-crowned stranger, or rather with his money. There was no standing this. The people said it was a crying shame, and reported it to the Cadi; the Cadi complained to Nedjid Pacha; and the Pacha, who was one of the old school, and a right down Frank hater, complained to the Commander-in-chief of the English forces at Beyrout. The Commander-in-chief sent several officers up to Damascus to investigate the case, which was tried in open divan before the Pacha, who summoned such as had charges against the gallant officer to appear before him. The charges brought against him were twofold. First, that he had endeavoured to subvert the minds of the people from rendering due homage to Ottoman authority by asking them such significant questions as, for instance, 'If the English were to lay siege to the country, with which of the powers would you side?' The second charge was, the heinous offence of making love to some score of Turkish damsels, besides the Armenian lady in question. The first charge was thrown out as frivolous, absurd, and annoying; the second was fully proved.

I acted as *turjaman Bashi* to the Court of enquiry, and from the circumstance of the gentleman being in a foreign land, I was naturally disposed to lean rather to the side of the Englishman. The Mahommedans observed this, and were very spiteful against me. The result of all this was, that the military gentleman was advised

to leave Damascus ; but he, availing himself of a moonless night, put a termination to the whole affair, by starting off for the sea-coast, carrying away with him a fair, young widow, who had captured his heart by her dancing, and to whom he was ultimately married; and, for aught I know to the contrary, they are to this day a very loving and happy couple. Strange to say, neither understood a word of each other's language, and it would appear, from this example, that words are not necessary where such expressive things as eyes and flowers are brought into play.

This romantic lady, after a lapse of time, settled at Beyrout, together with her affectionate husband ; the story had preceded them to this place, but they soon mixed in society as though nothing had happened. The Syrians, though strictly moral, mingle humanity with their laws of etiquette ; they do not, as in England, forever exclude from society such as have been guilty of so trivial a peccadillo as this lady was guilty of. They remember that all are but frail mortals and apt to err.

To me the English appear to be over severe. It is true, that in Turkey the Moslems are entitled to four wives, and that in England a man can only marry one ; but I should like to know who is the greater delinquent, he that avowedly and openly admits of polygamy, or that man, who, as is often the case amongst society in England, and indeed all Europe, vowing solemnly at the altar that "*forsaking all others he will keep only with her,*" marries one wife, and at the same time continues to associate with half a dozen other women ? For my part, whenever I hear of an English lady eloping, I cannot help fearing that she has been driven to it by the inconstancy or neglect of a wicked husband.

In Damascus, at the period I am writing of, there

dwelt an extraordinary man, well known to the English who visited the place as the proprietor of a large hotel, by the name of Sayid Ali; he also filled the office of chancellor to the English consulate. This extraordinary character could speak and write several languages with the utmost fluency, and no one could fathom out what countryman he was, or what creed he professed. With the English he was an Englishman, and none could doubt his pronunciation. This was the case with the French; whilst the Turks, listening in admiration to his high flow of Stamboline Turkish, and his profound knowledge of the Koran, ranked him amongst the most devout and most learned of their citizens. One thing only was positive with regard to Sayid Ali, and that was, that his wife was a Moslem, the daughter of some fanatical Sheikh. Sayid's wife had an extremely handsome sister; who having been seen but once, had captivated the heart of an old English official, who at that time resided at Damascus; and this gentleman, notwithstanding the great disparity between them in every respect, in age, rank and creed, determined, cost what it might, to marry the girl. Female friends were employed as go-betweens, and these so effectually wrought upon the imagination of the fair lady, that she actually resolved to embrace Christianity, and fly for succour to the arms of her lover. Things had arrived at this pitch, when Sayid Ali accidentally got scent of what was going on; he subsequently declared to me, that had it not been for the high official position of the gentleman in question, he certainly would have shot him; as it was, he contented himself with calling at his sister-in-law's house, and knocking at the door drew his sword; the girl responding to the knock,

opened the door, when the infuriated Sayid Ali made a murderous attack upon her, and inflicted a wound on her shoulder, a repetition of which must have proved fatal. As this happened during the day, the noise attracted a crowd around the house, and the girl was rescued. Rendered desperate by this, Sayid Ali made a plunge at himself, and inflicted a wound in his abdomen of nearly an inch deep; not, however, relishing the sensation, the monster drew out his sword, and calling lustily for aid was forthwith carried away to his own house. Here he was attended by the English medical officers then at Damascus. I shortly after called to see him, and to enquire into the cause of this murderous onslaught. In reply he told me that his motives were what I have already stated; he was determined that his name should not be defamed, or his wife's family put to shame by the act of a thoughtless, capricious child, winding up, however, with—

“I'm glad I have not killed her, and for my part I'll never be such a fool again as to stab myself to please any one in Damascus.”

The doctor dressed the wounds, and both shortly afterwards recovered, whilst the greatest delinquent in the affair suffered neither pain or inconvenience from his gross misconduct. He is now in high office under the government at Constantinople. This is a fair sample of the abuses practised by many of those in authority, who in lieu of holding out a pattern for imitation, both by example and precept, are unfortunately too prone to indulge their own vicious propensities, setting all propriety, honour, and justice at defiance. I do not mean to say that all incline in the same way—that all are addicted to falling desperately in love with every girl they meet; but this I assert, with very few exceptions,



they have their peculiar fancies, for the gratification of which they stoop to many acts of meanness. In illustration of what I say I may be permitted to quote one more instance,—a case widely different from the foregoing, and yet equally offensive to honourable minds.

One man, a sycophant, partly to curry favour with a great man whom he wished to oblige, partly to satisfy his avaricious propensities, delayed a steam packet twenty-four hours beyond its fixed time of departure, because the vessel chanced to sail upon a Saturday, and the great man in question was a Jew; he detained the steamer till Sunday morning to accommodate the fastidious Hebrew, and to profit by his commission on the lordly passage money.

Now this man is professedly a Christian, but he prefers breaking the Christian's sabbath to inconvenience his friend or his pocket; but apart from all this, we have still to calculate the losses arising from the expenses incurred by such a vessel lying unnecessarily idle—the risk of insurance, and the loss of time to moneys, cargo, and letters.

But let us turn to a more pleasing subject. In these latter days of progression and civilisation, Damascus happily has kept pace with the other towns in Syria; there has been a large influx of European merchants. The Greek patriarch has in the true spirit of civilisation, and after great exertions, established a school which will be productive of much good.

From Damascus we went down to Sidon, visiting, *en route*, the residence of the late Lady Hester Stanhope, at Djouni, which was even then fast falling to decay. Lady Hester I had known personally, and although clever and eccentric, with a head full of

strange fancies, yet she had a heart not devoid of good feelings and kind intentions. For my part, I can always recollect, with grateful pleasure, the kind reception I met with at her house, and if there is any thing which I consider base, it is the conduct of her biographer (who was also her physician), and who has abused a sacred trust to pander to the inquisitiveness of the European world; or else to contribute to the depth and weight of his own purse, has raked up the ashes of one, who at least towards himself, was the best of friends and patronesses; and whether the book contains much of truth or much of imagination, it is either a breach of confidence of the very worst order, or a libel on the dead which there is none to controvert or dispute.

At Sidon there, at that time, resided General Loustaneau, whose life abounded more in romantic incidents than all the novels of our most celebrated writers. In India he had served under a native Prince with such courage and distinction, and through so long a period of years that he had amassed an immense fortune. He was at the time of my visit a half-witted mendicant, one of the many objects of the late Lady Hester Stanhope's benevolence, and one who, like herself, was subject to many extravagant eccentricities. The story of Loustaneau is so remarkable that I cannot refrain from quoting part of it from Mr. Kelly's work on Syria:—

“General Loustaneau was a native of Aidens, in the department of Basses Pyrénées; his family was not wealthy, and his youthful ardour impelled him to seek his fortune in foreign lands. Arriving at Bordeaux for the purpose of embarking for America, he found a vessel about to sail for India with M. de Saint Lubin,

who was commissioned by Louis XVI. to propose to the Mahrattas a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, against the English. Loustaneau took advantage of the opportunity, gave up his American project, and in due time found himself amongst the Mahrattas. This was in the year 1778, when he was twenty years of age. War had for some time existed between the Mahrattas and the English, and Loustaneau, who wished to take service with the former, obtained a letter of recommendation to M. Norogue, a Portuguese officer, who commanded their forces. That General received him very courteously, but thought him too young to be entrusted with any command. Loustaneau, however, accompanied the army in its movements, and was witness to the continual advantages afforded the English by the unskilfulness of General Norogue. The Mahrattas, though thrice outnumbering their enemies, were constantly forced to yield their ground; at last the Prince succeeded in bringing the English to an engagement in a position unfavourable to the latter, inasmuch as it allowed of their being out-flanked by the superior number of their adversaries. But this did not avail them; the English entrenched themselves on an eminence from which their batteries committed great havoc among the Mahrattas. Loustaneau observing a height which commanded the English position, immediately mentioned the fact to Norogue, who received this communication with supercilious indifference. Stung to the quick by this contemptuous treatment, Loustaneau addressed himself to a Mahratta chief through an interpreter, and with the reckless enthusiasm of youth, pledged his head that he would be successful if he were given the command of a few pieces of cannon. Three

thousand horse and ten guns were placed under his orders; the result surpassed his hopes, and the English were driven from their position with great loss. In spite of Norogue's jealousy, a choncadar with a gold stick was soon sent in quest of the young Frenchman, who had rendered such essential service to the national cause. Loustaneau was presented to the chiefs who exercised the regency, and received a magnificent present. He remained in the service of the Mahrattas, and soon had a corps of 2000 men under his exclusive command. He took part in all the subsequent operations against the English, and was mainly instrumental in inflicting upon them those losses which for a while seemed to place our Indian empire in such imminent jeopardy.

"At the battle of Chassepachrer, he routed our seapoys with great slaughter; the battle was ended, the English artillery alone continued to fire a few volleys in its retreat, in order to protect the fugitives, when a grape-shot struck Loustaneau in the left-hand and carried off the four fingers and half the thumb. It was long before he recovered from the effects of this wound. When the stump was healed, he had a silver hand of very ingenious workmanship fitted to it. The first day he appeared at the head of his troops with this new kind of hand, a priest threw himself prostrate before his horse's feet, crying out, that the 'prophecy was fulfilled, since it was written in the temple of the God Siva, that the Mahrattas were to reach the summit of their glory under a man from the far west, who should have a silver hand, and prove invincible.'

"Loustaneau was thenceforth looked upon as something almost superhuman. Diamonds, precious stones, the richest presents of every kind, were lavished on

him from all sides. He was assigned a magnificent palace, with all the appurtenances of royal luxury. His stables contained thirty elephants sumptuously caparisoned, and a hundred and fifty horses, the best that India could produce. His body-guard consisted of 2000 men, with four pieces of cannon; and the principal chief had two colossal silver hands planted before the entrance of the palace that all men might know, by that token, that the man of destiny was the leader of the national forces.

“Another campaign took place, in which Loustaneau was again successful, and which terminated greatly to the satisfaction of the Mahrattas. On his return to Azra, he was received with honours such as were used to be conferred only on princes and sultans; and the ruling prince solemnly declared him ‘The Lion of the State and the Tiger in War.’

“Loustaneau married the daughter of a French officer in India; he had now been eighteen years among the Mahrattas; he had several children, and his wife urged him to return to Europe to enjoy the fruits of his toils.

“Notwithstanding his excessive generosity, the wealth he had accumulated was enormous; but, from the moment he quitted the territory of the Mahrattas, fortune, which till then had been so lavish to him of her favours, forsook him all at once, and the rest of his life was but one series of disasters and sorrows. He converted his whole fortune into paper, for he had not yet made up his mind where he would settle, and he did not wish to purchase any estates before his arrival. His homeward voyage was long and difficult; and he was several times in danger of shipwreck. When, at last, after a seven-month’s passage, he reached France,



the assignats had fallen into such utter depreciation, that he found the 8,000,000 of francs he had remitted home dwindled down to 220,000. This first blow made a terrible impression on a temper so violent as his, and so spoiled by prosperity; but he still possessed a considerable amount in diamonds, some of which he sold, and with the proceeds he settled in Tarbes with his family, consisting of two sons and three daughters. Shortly afterwards, he lost his favourite son, and his grief was such as to occasion him an attack of insanity, from which he did not completely recover for two years. When he was restored to his senses, he set about constructing extensive iron works on the frontiers of Spain, in order to afford his restless energies an object on which to employ themselves. For three years, his sole pleasure consisted in superintending his engineers and workmen, and watching the progress of the great constructions he planned.

“Things were in this state when fresh misfortunes befel him. He was on the point of realising the profits of his enterprise, when war broke out between France and Spain. Immediately upon the first disasters of the French arms, his buildings were burned, his furnaces destroyed, and his hopes annihilated. The ruin of his fortune was almost complete, and he only supported himself by selling, one by one, the costly jewels he had brought from India. All these misfortunes impaired his reason; he had continued fits of overwrought devotion, amounting at times to insanity. His family lived on in this way until 1815, in a state of mediocrity very hard to endure after their brilliant condition and their opulence in past years.

In 1815, Loustaneau's only surviving son, who was a captain in the imperial guards, was dangerously

wounded at Waterloo. His father saw himself on the point of losing him, and this shock seemed to restore to him the possession of his faculties. When he recovered, all the revived energies of his character were concentrated on the thought, how destitute would be the state of his family after his death; he determined, therefore, to return to India, though many years had elapsed since he left it. His son wished to go in his stead, but he would not hear of this; and in 1816 he embarked for Egypt, having raised the necessary funds for his journey by pledging a ruby of rare value, the last gift of his Mahratta patron. Not finding in Egypt an opportunity of pursuing his way by the Red Sea, he crossed over to Syria, with the intention of joining the caravan from Damascus to Bassorah; but he fell dangerously ill at Acre, his brain being again affected; he squandered away all his money in his delirium, and destroyed bills of exchange and other valuable papers. After this, he suffered for a while all the horrors of penury, and the renowned Loustaneau—'The Lion of the State and the Tiger in War'—was reduced to earn his bread as a day-labourer. In this deplorable condition he was found by M. Catafago, a wealthy Levantine merchant, who relieved his wants and took him into his house.

Loustaneau had occasionally lucid intervals, in which he talked of his past greatness, and related the history of his life and his afflictions; but he had the mortification of seeing that everything he uttered seemed to his hearers but an additional proof of his insanity. To make all sure, however, letters were written to France, requesting information respecting this extraordinary man; and at last his son, who had heard nothing of him for two years, made all haste to Syria,

and found his unfortunate father almost wholly deprived of reason. His journey to India was henceforth clearly impossible. The Captain had gathered together the last remnants of his fortune; and he remained for some time in Syria, doing everything that affection could suggest, in the hopes of restoring his father to himself.

“It was at this period that the old man’s melancholy story reached the ears of Lady Hester Stanhope. She was then in the heyday of her fame, and she offered Loustaneau and his son an asylum in her house. At the first sight of the latter, she was struck with the resemblance that he bore to the gallant lover she had lost. From the lines of his hand, the form of his foot, and the aspect of the stars, she gathered that the life of Captain Loustaneau was destined to be inseparably connected with her own. The Captain, however, had not lost sight of his Indian project, for he still hoped to recover some remains of the vast property his father must have left in that country. Lady Hester dissuaded him from going to India, and undertook to employ every possible means of recovering what remained of the old General’s property or fortune; but great changes had occurred since the old man had left the country. Wellesley’s (Wellington) victories had put the English in possession of a great portion of the Mahratta territory; Loustaneau’s princely protectors were no more, and his property had passed into other hands.

“It was a singular chance that brought together in a corner of Syria two beings so remarkable as General Loustaneau and Lady Hester Stanhope; they had long, mystical conversations together, and Lady Hester looked on Loustaneau as a prophet who was come to

prepare the way for her, and to be the forerunner of her triumph. The Captain sought to beguile the tedium of his existence by managing the household and the pecuniary affairs of Lady Hester. She treated him with the most assiduous kindness until his death, which happened, I believe, in 1825. Her feelings towards him were those of pure friendship, tinged by the memory of her youthful affections and stimulated by the fantastic notion that a secret bond irrevocably united his destiny with her own. After his death, she had him buried in her garden, and twice every day she visited his grave, decorated it with flowers, and remained by it absorbed in long reveries.

“General Loustaneau’s insanity became more intense after his son’s death, his delusions being greatly augmented by his intercourse with Lady Hester Stanhope. Celestial music floated round him; for a while he believed himself called to give battle to Bonaparte, who, he said, had returned to the earth under the form of Antichrist; and in 1831 he declared it his destiny to become king of Jerusalem when the fulness of time should have been accomplished. He had now warm altercations with Lady Hester; for he asserted his right to the bay mare with the natural saddle, whilst her ladyship was to have the white mare, and to ride with him into the Holy City as his wife, her place being at his left-hand and a little behind him.

“Her ladyship very soon saw it written in the stars that Loustaneau and herself were to part. Accordingly she had a house fitted up for his reception at Abra, a village within five miles of her own residence, on the road to Leyde. But she continued her benevolent protection towards him, and did not let him want for anything requisite for his comfort.

“Lady Hester died in June, 1839, a few days before the battle of Nezib, which she had foretold with rather surprising accuracy. Her wealth was all gone. She even left considerable debts, and her property was instantly seized by her creditors. Loustaneau being thus once more reduced to entire destitution, the French consul of Leden took charge of him, and gave him a humble lodging in the French khan. Thus this venerable old man, who had once possessed immense wealth, commanded great armies, and enriched multitudes of Europeans, now subsisted on charity. It has long been generally supposed that he was dead, as asserted by M. Jouay. He is dead, it is true, to all purposes of active life, but he has still a few lucid intervals in the midst of his harmless religious insanity. Happily for him, he has almost wholly lost his memory, and of all his past greatness he recollects nothing distinctly except the title he bore in India. Often does he proudly repeat that they called him formerly ‘The Lion of the State and the Tiger in War;’ and then, sadly reverting to his present condition, he subjoins, ‘And now I am nothing but an unfortunate beggar.’”

Such is the admirable account given by Mr. Kelly of this singular individual, who passed through all the stages from happiness and affluence to misery and destitution. Loustaneau is now dead, not only to purposes of active life, but dead in the literal sense of the word, and his bones repose in the European cemetery at Sidon; the life of this man and the site of his troubles affording a fresh incentive for strangers to visit Sidon, in addition to its ancient fame as a city of the days of Solomon.

Sidon is perhaps the most delightfully situated town



in all Palestine. Abounding with pleasant gardens, and rides and walks; the climate is healthy, and the commerce of the place rising into importance, and the harbour capable of great improvement. In May, 1851, the families of two American missionaries established themselves in this neighbourhood, and already the schools and the works of the mission are prospering.

From Sidon we visited Tyre! poor, solitary, desolate Tyre, in whose meagre forsaken town and bare rugged rocks, we had manifest proof of the never-failing veracity of Scripture prophecy. How else would the once greatest city of the earth, whose ships visited all parts, whose merchants had a world-wide reputation, be now an utter desolation, inhabited only by a few traders and wretched fishermen and their families, whose daily occupation of spreading out the nets to dry are so many consecutive proofs of the fulfilment of the words of the prophet. But so many modern travellers have described these parts, that it would be useless for me to dwell upon the subject in this work, so we quitted Sur, the modern Tyre, and a night's pleasant sail in a small shaktoor brought us to Acre. St. Jean d'Acre was at this period still suffering much from the explosion of the powder magazine, which so much assisted Admiral Napier in his siege; the houses were all tottering ruins, the mosques minus their minarets, and the stench from the accumulated mass of decomposed matter, the carcases of camels, sheep and oxen, and in some places the sun-bleached bones of unhappy beings, in the twinkling of an eye as it were hurried into eternity; these were a loathsome and melancholy spectacle.

I may here state that I was present at the bombard-

ment of Acre, and from a favourable position witnessed the terrific result of the "Geyser" bombshells; but I may also further state what is as yet a hidden mystery to the British public, and which in a great measure accounts for the facility with which this almost impregnable fortress was captured, and that is, that the Imams and the Cadi of Acre secretly warned the soldiery not to resist the arms of the British force there assembled, *because* they were fighting for the Sultan, whom it was their duty, as Mahomedans, to obey; and, moreover, that in the sight of God and the prophet, there was no other lawful Moslem king; none to be acknowledged, save the Sultan of the Sublime Porte, Abdul Medjid; and that if they acted against his interests, then the Prophet would utterly forsake them, and such as fell in battle might fully make up their minds to be hurled into eternal perdition, and that such as fought in his favour would assuredly go to heaven. Such an exhortation and threat, at such a peculiar time, was sure to have the desired effect.

Not only did the soldiers fight without spirit, but many of the artillery actually spiked their guns. Of this latter fact I myself had ocular demonstration when the engagement was over, and the allied forces landed at Acre. After this fact, it becomes not the English admiral to boast too much and compare his success with the failure of Napoleon.

From Acre, still journeying southward, we passed the famous brook Kedron, so often alluded to in Holy Writ, and passing through the miserable village of Kaipha, ascended Mount Carmel, and sojourned a couple of days in the hospitable convent of the Carmelite monks. Leaving Carmel, we passed through Cæsarea, now an utter desolation, and visited Jaffa and

Gaza, and from the latter place, striking inland, took in succession Hebron, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, the Dead Sea and the Jordan, besides visiting all the other towns of any note or importance, all of which have been often and fairly described by European travellers, so that the best thing I can do is to avoid repetition, and content myself with observing, that the reality far exceeded my expectations as regards the beauty of the scenery and the wild picturesque position of almost every town of note in Palestine. At the same time I deem it most essential to warn the English travellers to be very careful in the choice of a guide-book, as many, even up to a very late date, have been published with apparently no other aim than to puff up the author's vanity, containing mostly a tissue of unaccountable misrepresentations from first to last. If the traveller, in a spirit of knight-errantry, goes forth to visit the holy shores of Palestine and Syria, hoping there to bask under the bright light of large sunny-loving eyes—if he thinks to lead the Arab maid captive by the heart—to win over the smiles of the Grecian, or scampering over desolate mountains—to fall in with untutored Syrian maids, who sally forth and carry him from his horse, fatigued and fever-smitten, to be watched over and cared for by female philanthropists,—if, I say, the traveller quits England with any such notions, he will return to these shores grievously disappointed.

Although myself a native of the country, dressed in the costume, and speaking the language, still, with all these advantages, the maidens always fled at our approach, not even if they mastered their coyness, would they ever exchange a syllable with us strangers. Possibly, my friend and myself were not possessed of that charm which a recent gallant author,

according to his own account, seems to have carried about with him wherever he was ; for he says, that in many parts fathers of families rushed out and endeavoured to force him into a marriage with their daughters, or else the maidens themselves, in *villages he had never before visited*, came forth, having heard of his notoriety (this in parts where there is no post, and where news travels at the rate of a mile a week), to meet him with timbrel and dance, and other welcomings. The only note that ever welcomed us to such villages, was the angry tongue of a scolding harridan, or else the hooting of the owls or the cry of the jackal.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## FIRST VISIT TO ENGLAND.

IT sometimes happened that the naval officers belonging to the ship-of-war stationed at Beyrout, took up their temporary residence with some friend on shore, being always welcome guests at the houses of the inhabitants. It was in this way that I first came to cultivate an acquaintance with the Captain of Her Majesty's steamer, "Hecate," so that we were much thrown together. On one occasion, whilst he was a guest at our house, he proposed that I should accompany him on a pleasure cruise as far as Malta and back; a proposition I gladly acceded to, more particularly as my friend the Emir Beschir, with his family and a relation of my own, were at that time residing on the island. I had long had a desire to see Malta, for many had described it to me as a species of little world, where one might sit down in a *café* and study the characters of every European nation.

The alarm and grief of my relations on learning my determination was only to be equalled by the envious jeering of my companions, who, whilst they pretended to pity my infatuation, would, I feel persuaded, have parted with every para in their possession for a portion of my good luck.



The steamer was to sail at the end of the week, and I was so busy making preparations, packing and taking leave, that I really had not a moment's leisure for calm meditation,—and I am very glad I had not, for the chances are, that this, in conjunction with some of the melancholy forebodings of my friends, would have unnerved me for the trip. Seeing, however, that I was determined on starting, my neighbours changed their annoying prognostications into good acts, which acts consisted in inundating me with as many presents of sweetmeats, biscuits, etc., as would have kept me during a twelvemonth's passage round the world. I selected some of the best of them for the officers' mess, and at last the word ready being given, got my luggage together and embarked; the dispatches being received on board, and the "Hecate" soon after getting up her steam, we proceeded on our voyage to Malta accompanied by the prayers and blessings of a multitude of friends and relations assembled at Ras-Beyrout to witness our departure.

The day after we had sailed, I awoke at early dawn and crept up upon deck as best I could. The motion of the vessel was so strange and violent, that I reeled and staggered like a tipsy man, and felt confused, miserable, weak and sick. The horrible sensations I experienced on first awaking that morning cannot be easily erased from my mind. I was awoke by a singular and deafening noise, which seemed to proceed from directly overhead, which, as I afterwards discovered, was occasioned by the daily process of holy stoning the decks. I managed to reach the main-deck just in time to be handed to the larboard gangway by the officer of the watch, who there left me alone in my

misery with my head hanging over the bulwarks—a wretched victim to sea-sickness.

Bitterly, during that moment, did I lament having ever quitted Beyrout. My sufferings were so intense that I thought I must have died during the day. This was the first time I had ever found myself so far out at sea. There was no land in sight. The morning was gloomy and boisterous, and altogether my spirits felt so depressed that I resigned myself to Allah, and wrapping the loose folds of my large Cyprus cloak carefully around me, I sat down cross-legged in a corner behind the man at the helm, and vainly endeavoured to fall off to sleep. A nice cup of coffee which the captain's steward kindly brought, in a great measure revived me; this relief, however, was only temporary, the dreadful odour of the victuals cooking for breakfast, fried fish, ham and eggs, etc., these made me feel so ill that I was compelled to retire to my berth, and there I lay more dead than alive during the whole passage, utterly callous as to what became of me, and as to whether the vessel was steadily pursuing her voyage in safety or was in imminent danger of going to the bottom.

Some Capuchin friars were on board, returning from Jerusalem to Malta, accompanied by two young Syrian females who were going to Rome to be educated in the principles of the Roman Catholic religion, and they not only enjoyed the passage amazingly, being possessed of capital appetites, but they very uncharitably, though not very unlike human nature, mocked at my calamities and tried to heighten my alarm and sufferings by frightening me with false reports as to the vessel's danger, and as to my own weak state of health.

After intense sufferings and encountering much really

rough weather, we had at length the satisfaction of finding ourselves safe at anchor in the harbour of Valetta. I doubt whether any of the passengers that accompanied St. Paul on his disastrous voyage and shipwreck, suffered greater fear or pain than I had undergone ; certainly they could not have rejoiced more than I did at its happy termination. Blessed be God, who is not forgetful of His children, even in the vast unruly deep!

On arriving at Malta, we had eleven days' quarantine to perform ; but the tediousness of this imprisonment was much alleviated by the kindness and attention of the good Mr. Schlinz, whom I had known in Syria, and who now daily visited me at the Lazaretto, supplying me with books to fill up the tedium of dull hours. On the eleventh day, being admitted to pratique, I accepted the hospitable invitation of that gentleman to take up my quarters at his house. I was, through his politeness, introduced into the society of several of the leading families at Malta. On leaving Beyrout, I had been furnished with letters of introduction to Sir Frederick Bouverie, the then governor. His excellency received me with the utmost urbanity and kindness, and, indeed, I shall ever have cause gratefully to remember Sir Frederick's polite attention, as it was mainly through his instrumentality that I first visited the shores of Great Britain.

One of my first visits was, of course, to the Emir Beschir of Lebanon, who, with his family, were then residing there as political exiles. I had several long conversations with this once-powerful prince, and the Emir suggested that his wife and son should accompany me to London, there to exert their influence in endeavouring to prevail upon Her Majesty the Queen to

interpose her influence on their behalf. They communicated with the British Government both at home and in the island on this subject, but no encouragement was held out by the authorities there or in England for the furtherance of this scheme, and the subject, after a long correspondence, was, therefore, reluctantly dropped. The Emir, being hurt and displeased at this apparent neglect, sent his son to Constantinople, who, being well received by the Ottoman Government, wrote, at its suggestion, to invite his father to the Porte, an invitation he readily accepted; upon which the governor of Malta placed at his disposal a British war-steamer, and the Emir and his family immediately quitted the island.

I may here be permitted to deviate a little from my journal to give a brief description of these Emirs, their origin and end. The family of the Emirs were originally Moslems, natives of Shaahbah, a village on the southern plain of Lebanon, and they are said to be descended in a direct line from the renowned Moslem Prophet, and to have ruled over the Lebanon for many years. The founder of the family Yusuf al Husn, or the handsome or beautiful Yusuf, so called from his great personal attractions, was, on account of his bravery and influence, chosen by the mountaineers of Lebanon to be their prince.

Before consenting to the choice, however, he himself stipulated that the power of life and death should be invested in his hands, and this having been agreed to, he was duly elected Emir, came to the mountains, and settled amongst his people, over whom he was to rule with a despotic sway. During the time this prince held the supreme power he preserved the greatest order amongst the unruly tribes over whom he was placed, and travellers passed and repassed with the greatest safety. Some

time after he had settled amongst the Druses and Maronites, after mature consideration, he came to the resolution of embracing the Christian religion, although such a measure was sure to prove disadvantageous to him, by estranging the Druses and occasioning the Sultan's displeasure; he, however, retained undisputed right of his position and authority, and on dying, was succeeded by his son, the Emir whom I then met at Malta.

The motives of this second Emir's disgrace arose from his having fallen into disrepute with the government from not immediately joining the Seraskier Pacha on the occasion of the expulsion of the Egyptians from Syria, but the poor man was actuated by causes which few can help both admiring and pitying; his son was at that time with Ibrahim Pacha, and had it been known to that warrior that the Emir had joined the forces against him, there is little doubt but that he would have caused his son to be cut to pieces. Under these circumstances, the Emir was constrained to remain on the mountains till the expulsion of the Egyptian troops had been effected. He then went down to Sidon and surrendered himself to the English, and was by them conveyed in a frigate to Beyrout.

The Seraskier having given out that he was in possession of a Firman, by the authority of which, could he lay hold of the Emir, he would undoubtedly behead him, and send his head as a trophy to Constantinople, the English authorities strongly recommended his departure for Malta, where once on English ground his safety would be ensured. The Emir accordingly came to that island, and was very well received by the governor, who placed a palace at his disposal. I must



acknowledge that all that the Emir said about Sir Frederic Bouverie redounded much to his Excellency's credit. He spoke of him as a humane and kind governor, and one who knew how to respect fallen dignity.

I have already said the Emir ultimately left Malta for Constantinople. On arriving at Stamboul he was exiled to Zafron Boli, a place notorious for the animosity of its inhabitants towards Christians, and where his eldest son, pining on account of the miseries endured by his father, soon succumbed. Here he remained some time subjected to much mental suffering. Often in after years he told me in familiar conversation, that what afforded him some small consolation was the similitude between his own fate and that of the late King Louis Philippe.

After some time, through the kind intervention of one of the European ambassadors, the Emir was brought to Broussa, and ultimately removed to Constantinople, where within a short time, himself and his remaining son sunk into the grave. Every respect was paid to his memory; by the Sultan's order a public funeral was awarded him, and masses said for the repose of his soul at the government expense, a striking proof of the liberality and toleration of the government of the Sublime Porte.

During my stay at Malta, the late Dr. Alexander, the first Protestant bishop in Jerusalem, arrived at that island, accompanied by his family and suite, *en route* for his new see. I shall never forget my amazement on being introduced to that prelate, to find that he wore no beard. A bishop without a beard was a perfect marvel to me, and a thing unheard of in the East, in short, perfectly fabulous. This excellent man

condescended to ask my opinion on many points connected with the East, and I made so bold as to tell him that if he wished to pass for a bishop amongst the natives of Syria, he must let his beard grow without further delay.

Malta was a great novelty to me—the beauty of the scenery—the bustle of the place—the frigates, steamers, schooners, boats, carriages, soldiers, bands of music, friars, nuns, and a vast concourse of people in every imaginable costume, and speaking every known tongue. All these perplexed, astonished, and delighted me at one and the same time, and a drive in the environs of Valetta was a perfect treat. At Malta I first got an idea of European manners; and I must own, my astonishment was very great to see the females, with faces perfectly uncovered, chatting in the greatest familiarity with the opposite sex, and it was to me quite incomprehensible. But my greatest astonishment was excited at a ball to which I was invited. The waltzing, polkaing, etc., appeared to me a most ridiculous and indecent exhibition; and it was a long time before this feeling wore off. I have to this day been unable to find out how any pleasure can be derived from a constant spinning round like the sails of a mill.

It was not without much regret that I quitted the island—a perfect scene of enchantment—and the kind, hospitable acquaintances I had formed during my brief stay. His excellency the governor had been good enough to exert his influence in procuring me a passage on board of a war-steamer on the point of leaving for England. Such an opportunity was not to be thrown away, so hurrying down to the water-side, I embarked, on board H. M.'s steam-frigate Gorgon, Capt. W. H. Henderson, C.B., 28th February, 1842. I had leisure

to survey the busy scene around us before the vessel finally started. Shore-boats were plying around, offering for sale fruits, cigars, and canary birds. On board all was order and silence; around, all confusion, shouting, and quarrelling, and whilst mentally occupied in drawing this comparison, the anchor was weighed and we steamed rapidly away from the pleasant shores of the island of Malta.

After an agreeable voyage, marked by no particular incident, we duly arrived at Portsmouth. On my arrival, I was made happy by meeting the Rev. Mr. Marshall, chaplain of Nelson's ship, the *Victory*, and whose acquaintance I had the pleasure of forming when that gentleman was travelling in Syria. Mr. Marshall and all the officers of the ship were extremely kind to me, and shewed me over the old ship of the renowned admiral. At Portsmouth I landed, and having got a permit, was kindly shewn over the splendid dockyards. Here also I tasted some water twenty years in cask. I afterwards went round in the same steamer to Woolwich, and having shewn my letters of introduction to the captain, he kindly undertook to advise me. He recommended me to proceed at once to the house of the Honourable and Rev. Baptist Noel; and acting upon his advice, I came to London, and thence proceeded to Hornsey, at that time the residence of my reverend friend.

Confused and amazed as I was with the noise and bustle around me in so vast a place as London, I was sufficiently alive to my own interests to have my eyes open, so that I should not be cheated. This led to a ludicrous altercation between myself and a toll-collector at a turnpike. The man insisted on his money being paid; I, on the other hand, as obstinately refused,

assuring him that, though a foreigner, I was well acquainted with the tricks practised upon travellers; in short, I thought the man was asking for what, in my own country, is termed a *bakhsheesh*, which means nothing more or less than a present. Some gentlemen, however, came up and explained how matters stood, and then I paid the trifle and bade the driver proceed.

Nothing could exceed the Christian brotherly reception I met with at the excellent Mr. Noel's house; he actually busied himself with helping to carry in my baggage, and I was lost in admiration to observe how, in the bosom of his own family, he would play and sport with his own children, doing anything for their amusement and to make them happy. His early rising and great taste for gardening quite astonished me. Pleasant indeed were the days that I spent under his hospitable roof, and if any in this world have a claim upon my esteem and gratitude, it surely must be Mr. Noel and his amiable lady.

Leaving my kind host's house, which I did with unfeigned regret, I lived some time in London with Mr. W. Brown, in order to make myself familiar with the many sights so well worthy of visiting; and I then proceeded to Wimbledon, in order that, under the care and tuition of the Rev. William Edelman, the clergyman of the place, I might improve myself in English, and be prepared for a college education. I owed this introduction to the kindness of the Rev. W. Neven and the Hon. Capt. Maude, noted for their civility to all my countrymen that have ever visited England. In Mr. Edelman's house, I found a happy home, for I was considered and treated in every respect as one of the family. Mrs. Edelman was a very accomplished lady; she kindly undertook to teach me drawing, and she was

well versed in Latin and classics. Of the many kind friends I met with during my stay at Wimbledon, I may particularise and thank the kind-hearted Mrs. Marryatt, mother of the celebrated novelist, who, at the advanced age of eighty, looks as blooming as though she were in the prime of life. The venerable lady is a great botanist and very fond of gardening. Mrs. Russell and her two daughters shewed me great civility, as did the gifted Mrs. Hudson, who is unfortunately blind. I am also much indebted to the attention and civility of Major Oliphant, the East India director, and my friends Mallison and Peach and their families; in short, without enumerating their names, I thank all my good friends at Wimbledon.

One day at church I was surprised and gratified at recognising in the person of a very tall gentleman sitting in a pew some distance from me, the late Captain Murray of the Rifles, an old friend who had been a visitor at our house in Syria; he was as pleased as myself at the recognition, and having introduced me to his mother and sisters, insisted on my going home with him to lunch. Such acts of attention and kind civility were of daily occurrence during my stay at Wimbledon; but I must not forget to thank Miss C—, who was so good as to be at the trouble of taking my portrait.

I witnessed a cavalry review before His Royal Highness Prince Albert; the dazzling splendour of the accoutrements surprised me very much. Here also I was once nearly being made eye-witness to a detestable duel. The circumstances of this adventure were as follows, viz.:—I was one day walking with Mr. Walmsley, now of the Foreign-office, and Captain John Nunn, a military officer from Ireland, when passing near



Wimbledon-common, we saw some people busily occupied in measuring the ground. Imagining them to be engineers occupied in a survey, I was glad of the opportunity likely to be afforded me of improving myself in this science by closely watching their proceedings. With this intention I asked my friends to approach nearer to them; judge then of my horror when informed by them, that these preliminaries were evidently being arranged for a duel about to take place between two gentlemen, who had probably quarrelled about some trifle, possibly *un affaire de cœur*, and who were going to settle their differences in this disgraceful manner. One of my friends ran and fetched a constable, who speedily terminated the proceedings by virtue of his staff of office.

I cannot say how detestable and absurd this crime appeared in my eyes—such bloodshed to occur in civilised England appeared to me marvellous—in a country professedly Christian. I really began to wish myself back in Syria again; for if this was to be the result of civilisation and education, ignorance were bliss indeed.

On my first arrival in England, and for many months afterwards, I was greatly at a loss to comprehend the many idioms of the language; and the result was that I was perpetually the victim of some ludicrous error in either speaking or misunderstanding the English. Previous to my departure from Syria, I had become acquainted with the son of the late respected vice-Chancellor, Sir Launcelot Shadwell, now a commander in Her Majesty's navy. On our parting he had desired me, should I ever visit England, to call upon his father, from whom I could readily obtain his address. Soon after my arrival I bethought myself of this

invitation, and called at the court-house at Westminster. On enquiring of an attendant if Sir Launcelot was within, the man replied in the affirmative, but at the same time gave me to understand that Sir Launcelot was *sitting*, and that therefore I could not hope to see him.

This reply naturally very much amazed me, and I therefore persisted in my request.

"I tell you, Sir, that Sir Launcelot is *sitting*," was again the answer of the servant.

This rather annoyed me. "Well, Sir," rejoined I, "I know that Sir Launcelot is *sitting*; I never supposed for an instant that he was lying down or asleep at this hour of the day, and that is just the very reason why I have called to see him."

I need not say that my reply as much astonished the official as I was confounded at his obstinacy. After some little altercation, however, I was made to understand that the term *sitting*, as used in this instance, referred to Sir Launcelot's official occupations, and not a little abashed, I apologised for the error, at the same time explaining to the man the motives of my visit. I begged him to take in my card, and in the mean time walked into the court, not however without a fresh difficulty occurring, for the official requested me to take off my cap, for I then wore what I have been accustomed to all my life, the *fez* or *tarboush*. On this request being repeated, I told the man that I would much sooner take off my boots, as it was disrespectful in my country to go bareheaded into the presence of one's superiors. I suppose the man had never seen such a curious customer as I seemed to him to be; he however implored of me not to remove my boots, and without further demur, allowed me to remain.

I afterwards saw Sir Launcelot in the private office of the Chancellor. He received me with stiff *hauteur* and distant politeness, and on making known my errand, regretted that he could not give me his son's address, but said that if I left my own, he would forward it to his son. This I did, and rather hurt at the frigidity of his manner, speedily withdrew.

A few days after this, I received a very kind letter from Sir Launcelot, enclosing me one from his son, and in which Sir Launcelot, after apologising for the apparent want of courtesy displayed in his reception, which he justly attributed to the impostures often practised by persons of foreign appearance on the credulity of English gentlemen, concluded by hospitably inviting me to dinner, when I should have the happiness of once again meeting my friend, his son.

About the same time that I had come to England, there also arrived a young Druse Sheikh from the mountains of Lebanon, who, attended by his two servants, had left his home to be educated; and government had placed him under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. ——. Some time afterwards, one of the servants from some misunderstanding, attempted to stab that gentleman, but was fortunately prevented. A great disturbance, however, occurred, and the police were obliged to interfere and disarm them. In 1843 the Prince went raving mad, and was sent back to his friends. I afterwards met him on one occasion on the Lebanon, and he told me that he was very ill, as the English had put a charm into his stomach; and he begged of me to give him an English lancet to perform an operation and cut the charm. Luckily there are instances directly opposite to this case, or else one might be discouraged in carrying out the good cause

of Syrian education. The fate of Assaad Shidiac (whose brother is considered one of the first Arabic and English scholars, and has been for many years employed by the Church Missionary Society in translating the Bible from English into Arabic), who fell a martyr to the cause, shews triumphantly that few people can be more sincere converts than the Syrian Christians.

This admirable young man was originally a Maronite, but having been educated by the missionaries, was led to see the errors of the Romish faith. While travelling amongst his own native villagers he was seized, and the people tried to force him to renounce the faith he had adopted. On his refusal, they imprisoned and otherwise ill-treated him. A merchant residing at Beyrout very soon flew to his rescue, but alas! he arrived too late, the noble soul of Shidiac had fled for ever from its earthly tabernacle, and the immediate cause of his death remains to this day enveloped in mystery.

I remember well that on first arriving in England I had a habit of sitting cross-legged on a chair or an ottoman. This position used to amuse my English friends very much, and on one occasion when I detected a number of young ladies laughing amongst themselves and pointing at me, I anxiously enquired the cause of their merriment, and one of them volunteered to tell me that it was only tailors in this country that resorted to the use of such a droll position. I assured them that in Syria the nobles of the land sat cross-legged; but thanking them for this gentle correction, I ever after endeavoured to sit as much like an Englishman as I could, a task which I at first found both difficult and disagreeable.

At this time I received intelligence of the death of a

very dear friend and relative, and this melancholy news urged on me the necessity of returning to Syria. I accordingly began to make preparations, and was so fortunate as to meet Sir George Otway, who was going up the Mediterranean in command of the "Virago" steamer, and who very kindly gave me a passage as far as Malta.

On board the "Virago" I had the happiness of meeting those amiable noblemen, the Marquis of Worcester and Lord Clarence Paget. We touched at Gibraltar, and were there joined by the bishop of that diocese who was about to pay a visit to Malta. We had a remarkably pleasant voyage out, and on arriving once more at Malta, I immediately occupied myself on preparations for landing, not displeased at the idea of once again visiting that pleasant little island for a few days. In the midst of all this, my attention was suddenly attracted to the constant succession of flags that were being rapidly hauled up and down and changed. I was of course ignorant as to the motives of these signals. In a short time, however, Sir George Otway enlightened me on this subject by informing me with a smile in his countenance, that the "Medea" steam frigate, Captain Warden, with the Lycian expedition, was about to leave for Rhodes, and that he was glad to say he had been successful in procuring me a passage by her. Accordingly, taking a hearty leave of the excellent commander and gallant officers of the "Virago," and bidding adieu to my noble fellow-passengers, I was quickly transferred from one vessel to the other.

On the deck of the new steamer I was delighted to recognise the features of my old acquaintance Mr., now Sir Charles Fellowes, who was then proceeding to



conduct the expedition to Lycia in Asia Minor. In a few days the steamer landed me at Rhodes. I joined the Austrian boat at that island, and was soon, to my great joy and satisfaction, safely landed at Beyrout.

On joining my old acquaintances, I was much amused at the ridiculous reports in circulation as to the results of my visit to England. Some imagined I had been made a bishop, whilst others stated that I had given myself out as the Prince of Syria, and had persuaded the English government to grant me a fleet to conquer the country. I was frequently asked by the chiefs when I expected the ships to arrive. All concluded that I was thoroughly versed in medicine, as the people of Syria imagine all Europeans, and those who visit that country, to be well acquainted with this science.

After I had been a short time at Beyrout, I went on a visit to the mountains, when a desperate war broke out between the Maronites and the Druses, through the machinations of the priests. The Druses immediately made a desperate attack upon the village of Dayr Al Kamar, where at that time the Emir Kasim was residing at the palace. The village was nearly destroyed and much blood was shed. The palace was sufficiently strong to resist their attack. The government was so amazed at this outbreak, that the Emir was ordered to go to Beyrout, whence he was sent to Constantinople. I myself remained a short time at Beyrout to arrange some private affairs. These being settled to the satisfaction of all concerned, I took my passage to Constantinople on board of one of the Austrian steamers, and after a prosperous voyage was duly landed at Stamboul. This was the first time I had ever visited the great Moslem capital; but I came here after having seen and been resident at London, and it consequently had

few charms for me, though I must admit, that as seen from the sea in approaching it, I thought Stamboul one of the most lovely spots I had ever set eyes on.

Here I soon joined my old acquaintance the Emir Kasim. The story of this prince is as follows:—

His childhood was passed on Lebanon, and ultimately he became possessed of large landed estates, to the cultivation of which he devoted much of his time. Living in a fine mansion in the village of Hadded, about four hours' journey from Beyrout, the greater portion of which belonged to him, his house was at all times open to the traveller, whether poor or rich; and indeed, no person ever passed his door without experiencing the hospitality of the owner. The chief objects of the Emir's attention were silkworms, of which he kept immense numbers. He was also celebrated for his fine breed of Arabian horses. Devoted to the pleasures of hunting wild boars in the neighbourhood of Damascus, and shooting, his great delight was a *battue* of partridges, for the perfect enjoyment of which an excellent system had been established. The unfortunate birds (of the red-legged species), having been gradually accustomed to be fed in a small open spot, whenever the Emir felt inclined for the sport, he ensconced himself snugly behind a bush especially prepared for the purpose, and blazed away at his victims at his ease. It is quite certain that the Emir had not had the advantage of a sporting education in England, but it cannot be denied that the natural cunning of the man had led him to imitate closely a European practice. In other respects he was an ignorant and unlettered man; his only accomplishments being a little reading and writing.

When the Emir Beschir had been called upon to join the allies with his forces against Ibrahim Pacha, but

was unable to comply with the call, Kasim collected all his followers and went down to the sea-coast to join Sir Charles Napier, who, in return, promised to make him Prince of Lebanon, and to add Beyrout and Sidon to his principality; his losses in money and property were immense for Syria, but he listened to the promises of the English which were to the effect that he should be amply recompensed. These promises were, however, never fulfilled. The title of Prince of Lebanon was certainly granted him; but the disturbance before narrated broke out, and his removal was the result. It was imagined at the time that the political influence of another power outweighed that of England, and caused this measure to be brought about. On his arrival at Constantinople from Beyrout, the Prince was brought before the divan and called upon to answer certain charges brought against him. This he succeeded in doing to the satisfaction of the authorities, and he was accordingly acquitted; but it was thought that his presence amongst the mountaineers might again cause a revolt, and the government, therefore, ordered him to remain in Turkey.

While in Constantinople I had laid his case before Lord Cowley, the British ambassador, who, upon ascertaining the real state of affairs, promised to exert himself in his favour, which promise his lordship fulfilled to the utmost. The prince, not understanding the integrity of his lordship's character, and being a total stranger to the system of European diplomacy, wished to force on his lordship the acceptance of some very valuable Arab horses, which present, of course, was instantly refused. This very much astonished the Emir, who had all his life been accustomed to Oriental tactics in policy, in which such an argument was the only one ever likely to be productive of beneficial results. This, in fact, has been the

system practised from the earliest ages up to the present date. We read in the Bible of the wife of Nabal riding forth from Carmel, accompanied with donkey-loads of presents, to meet David, in order that by soft words and rich gifts she might propitiate the king in her favour, and turn his wrath away from her husband. The meeting between Jacob and Esau gives another instance of this method of conciliating favour being resorted to.

The Emir remained for some time under surveillance at Constantinople, when, through the strenuous exertions of Lord Cowley, a small pension was obtained from the Government. Some time after this, when I was in England, I received some letters and enclosures from him.

After perusing the whole of the letters, I came to the resolution of delivering one intended for Sir Charles Napier personally. Sir Charles received me with the rough cordiality of an English sailor, and after a long conversation about the affairs of Syria, told me, that now he much regretted the part he had taken in Eastern politics, and promised to exert himself in favour of the Emir Beschir Kasim, and of Syria, at the same time exhibiting great interest for the welfare of its inhabitants. He applied to Lord Palmerston in behalf of the prince, and through his influence, after a long correspondence, instructions were forwarded to Sir Stratford Canning to exert himself in his favour; but, during this interval, a severe illness had deprived my unfortunate friend of his sight. At length, through the kindness of Aali Pacha, the then minister for foreign affairs, permission was obtained for his return to Syria, upon the Emir undertaking to live there strictly as a private individual, and to interfere in no way with the politics of the country. He is now living on Mount Lebanon, where, at the advanced age of about eighty

years, he exerts himself as far as age will permit, in promoting the happiness of those around him. But to return to my narrative.

During my stay at Constantinople, I was fortunate enough to make the acquaintance of many warm friends, and among others, of the lamented Lord William Clinton, who at that time, was fulfilling the duties of secretary to the embassy, also of Mr. Wood and Mr. Allison, who also had appointments at the embassy, Mr. Cumberbatch, the consul-general, and his brother. I further had the melancholy satisfaction of making the acquaintance of the late Doctor Bennett, chaplain to the embassy, a truly good man, and one who did credit to his creed.

Dr. Bennett had a large family of sons and daughters, all scattered about over the world. One is, I believe, now high in the East India Company's service in Bengal, another attached to the consulate at Varna; one died in Suedia in December, 1850; and there is one, I believe, in England, who has embraced his father's profession and entered the ministry. Mrs. Bennett was a most exemplary wife; and I only regret that I have never been enabled to discover her address in England. From her I received my first impression in favour of English wives; her never-tiring and affectionate attendance upon the good doctor when seized with his last fatal illness, seemed to me, who was then unaccustomed to the devotion displayed by English women in time of sickness, truly angelic, and quite disheartened me when drawing a comparison between them and my own countrywomen, ignorant of reading and writing, though doubtless, if educated, susceptible of all the more refined feelings of civilisation.

Though on the point of falling desperately in love with one of the fair daughters of the land, this con-



sideration effectually checked my enthusiasm. A lady-friend had given me an eloquent description of a young Greek damsel, to which I was more than half inclined to listen, when the example I have already quoted made me suddenly remember that such things were not to be hoped for save in an English wife.

During my stay at Constantinople, I renewed my acquaintance with the Rev. Mr. Goodall, my former kind instructor, who had left Syria and come to reside in that city, where, in conjunction with the other American missionaries, he carried on his arduous duties with unremitting zeal. Though not long resident at Constantinople, I was witness on more than one occasion, to the havoc committed by the fires that are incessantly occurring. From one of these I myself was a severe sufferer. Once, whilst spending the evening with Lord W. Clinton, a fire broke out in the house next to his. As mine was only a few doors further off, I hastened away to rescue my property, and with the assistance of the *hammahls*, or porters, succeeded in removing it into the centre of a neighbouring field, where it would be out of harm's way. Having done this, I returned immediately to Lord Wm.'s to give him what assistance I could in helping to remove his property to a place of safety. The fire committed fearful ravages. A whole quarter of Pera was destroyed. When it was at last extinguished, I hastened to look after my own property, but such had been the devastation committed by the flames, that the whole face of the district was changed, and I found it utterly impossible to recognise any spot or mark which might afford the slightest clue as to the whereabouts of my late quarters, and thus lead to the recognition of the field. After a long and unsuccessful search, I was

obliged to give the matter up, and I was thus deprived of the whole of my personal effects. This was in the winter of the year 1846.

After some months' residence at Constantinople, through Lord Cowley's kind exertions with the Turkish government, I was sent to England, and was furnished with letters to Prince Callimaki, then ambassador at the court of St. James. Lord Cowley gave me a passage to Malta in an English war-steamer. We touched at Corfu, where I was so fortunate as to make the acquaintance of Lord Seaton, who at that time held the office of Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Isles. Both himself and family treated me with the greatest hospitality. During my short stay, I had time to discover that his lordship's popularity amongst the residents was very great.

From Corfu we came to Malta, where I had the pleasure of meeting several dear friends again. I stayed here for a fortnight, and on one occasion, I regret to say, I witnessed conduct most unusual in British officers, who, with few exceptions, I have found ever mindful of their position as gentlemen. One evening, at the theatre, a number of the junior officers were present, and, in spite of the quiet remonstrances of the audience persisted in placing their feet on the ledge in the front of the boxes. The Maltese at length became so exasperated that a number of them left the house and awaited the departure of the officers, when they assailed them in a most furious manner, and would certainly have inflicted serious injury upon them had not a guard arrived opportunely to separate the combatants. At the height of the riot my curiosity was much excited on observing a peasant, who had struck down an officer, and seemed apparently about to follow up his attack, suddenly desist and render the utmost assistance

to his late foe. Being slightly acquainted with the gentleman, I next day enquired what could have caused this change, and was much surprised to find that this strange occurrence arose from the peasant having, by a secret sign, discovered that the officer was a brother mason. I could not but admire a system productive of such benevolent results, and a few evenings after, happening to be dining with my friend, Captain Ford of the artillery, and understanding from him that he was engaged to attend a lodge on the island, I begged he would procure me admission. This he kindly consented to do, and I was, therefore, duly initiated. The kind feeling and brotherly love I have met with among masons, has rendered this event one of the happiest of my life.

From Malta I came to England through France, *viâ* Marseilles. At Marseilles I put up at the Hotel De l'Europe. Being at that time ignorant of the language, I found myself awkwardly situated, for shortly after my arrival, having washed my hands, I could find no place wherein to empty the basin, and being amongst strangers, I felt great diffidence and awkwardness in making known my wants. In this dilemma, I resorted to the expedient of throwing the water out of the window. I did so, and was chuckling at the success of my plan, when my attention was attracted by a great noise in the streets, and, to my surprise, I heard foot-steps and angry voices approaching my bed-room door.

On their entering, I found that the water had unfortunately alighted on a French officer, who at that moment chanced to be passing in full-dress uniform. His indignation was such that I expected to be annihilated on the spot. I presume, however, that the people of the hotel would not permit him to wreak his vengeance on me, and so he contented himself by giving

me into the charge of the police, who desired me the next day to appear before the magistrate (the complainant appearing in person). I of course made ample apologies through an interpreter, and the matter was at length satisfactorily settled. This officer and myself afterwards became very good friends; he explained to me that he had imagined I was an Arab from Africa, who had thus sought to revenge myself for injuries I might have received from their hands whilst in Algeria, and that this had determined him to have me punished, adding that had he known that I was a Syrian, and above all from Mount Lebanon, he would certainly have been disposed to be more lenient. This *contretemps* shewed me the necessity of being acquainted with the customs and languages of the places through which I might be necessitated to travel.

I left Marseilles by the diligence, and was very surprised at the slow method of travelling adopted by the French people. As compared to the railroad transit in England, they seemed a century behind. The idea seems quite absurd that a country like France, which aspires to rivalry in arts and sciences no less than in accomplishments, should compel unhappy travellers to lose three days in performing a distance that could almost be done in a few hours in England.

I made a short stay at Paris, where I met with great kindness from the Ottoman ambassador, Suliman Pacha, and was lucky enough while there also to make the acquaintance of that celebrated statesman and profound scholar, M. Guizot. The author of *The Consulate and the Empire*, M. Thiers, also honoured me with his friendship. With this last eminent statesman I had a long and interesting conversation respecting the Syrian campaign of 1840, and he evinced a most lively interest in the fortunes of the grand Emir Beschir.

Under the pretence of collecting money for the sufferers of Mount Lebanon, an association was formed at that time in Paris, with the secret intention of making a tool of one of the Emir's family, and through his instrumentality exciting a rebellion amongst the inhabitants, and then taking advantage of their civil discord.

Being a native of those parts, the ambassador thought that I could without exciting suspicion gain some information as to the real projects of these people. I obtained possession of a pamphlet, in which their benevolent views were set forth as a blind to their proceedings, from the treasurer of the society, with whom I was formerly acquainted, but who, ignorant of my intentions, declared its real purposes. Their object was to excite commotions, and through the medium of these civil discords to increase the influence of France in those parts.

On my arrival in England in October, 1847, I presented my letters of introduction to Prince Callimaki, who introduced me to the members of his suite. After some deliberation, the Prince and my English friends thought it would be better for my interests to study a profession than to remain simply attached to the Embassy: but they left it to me to choose what that profession should be. After mature reflection, I fixed upon surgery, which I thought would more than any other render my services of use to my fellow-countrymen. On making my choice known, the Prince and Mr. Zohrab kindly undertook to consult with Mr. Benjamin Phillips, the eminent surgeon of Wimpole-street, to whom I was furnished with a letter of introduction. The parental conduct of this gentleman towards me I shall ever call to mind with the deepest veneration, and in the phraseology of my countrymen,



*the ashes of my bones will not cease to retain this feeling.* It was at last determined that I should reside with Mr. Drewitt, of Curzon-street, May-fair; this gentleman and his kind-hearted lady exerted themselves to the utmost to procure my comfort and further my views, and whilst under their hospitable roof, I enjoyed every domestic happiness.

In order still further to advance my interests, the Prince Callimaki, Mr. Phillips, and other friends, most kindly addressed letters to the Directors of King's College, introducing me to them, and stating my earnest wish to attend the valuable lectures of this institution. In reply, the much respected principal, Dr. Jelf, immediately sent me an admission to the College, and he himself received me in the most generous and noble manner, and exhorted me to use my endeavours to persuade my countrymen to follow my example.

I now regularly attended these lectures, and from both professors and students, received every civility and attention. At first my repugnance to the dissecting-room was so great and overpowering, that I went to the prince and earnestly besought of him to let me relinquish the profession, telling him that I thought it quite an act of barbarity thus to mutilate the dead. The prince, however, after many arguments, induced me to persevere a little longer. I took his advice, and soon found that this feeling of repugnance gradually subsided; nay, more than this, I began to take peculiar pleasure in the study, when the whole magnitude of its wonderful philosophy burst upon my understanding. One day a trifling accident occurred to me—trifling in appearance, but which very nearly terminated fatally. The event, however, was productive of one

good result, it shewed me the sincere and unaffected esteem of English friends, and made me happy in the knowledge that I was fortunate enough to have hundreds, even in England, deeply interested in my welfare.

Whilst assisting in the dissecting-room in November 1849, I accidentally pricked my finger with a poisoned knife, but being engaged on that day to dine with the excellent and good Lord Cranworth, the present Lord Chancellor, the hospitalities of that nobleman and the cheering music of his lady and her sister, Lady Eardley, entirely drove the circumstance from my memory. This was the ninth of November, and I was engaged to join the festivities at the Guildhall in the evening. At midnight, whilst in the midst of my enjoyment, I was seized with sudden illness, and my good friend, the late Sir Felix Booth, immediately sent me home in his carriage. After a night of extreme wretchedness and misery, I next morning summoned around me a host of my medical acquaintances; but these, alas! were but Job's comforters, for they one and all assured me, that should erysipelas supervene, death would be the certain result. I need not here relate the depressing effect this news had upon my already exhausted spirits.

My English friends may smile at what I am now about to relate, but the impression made at that period on my mind was so great, that I cannot refrain from mentioning the matter.

While in my own country (according to the universal custom of the inhabitants), I had sought to dive into the secrets of futurity through the aid of a *munajjim*, or magician, who predicted that on a Friday I should be seized with a dangerous illness or be shot, either

purposely or by accident, and that in all probability either misfortune would prove fatal to me. In my almost helpless state, this circumstance coming vividly to my mind, was all-sufficient to have brought about the foretold result, for it certainly for some time hindered my recovery. I sent for a Syrian friend and made my will, and he committed to paper all my good wishes towards my kindred at home.

During this sad time, my first<sup>e</sup> English friend, the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel was most indefatigable in his attentions; and this good man comforted me with prayers, and taught me to lean on the word of God for comfort and succour, not only in this affliction, but in every tribulation. I likewise received a visit from Cardinal Wiseman, who, meeting my friend and medical adviser, Mr. Phillips, at the door, asked permission to see me. This was reluctantly granted, and only upon condition that the cardinal should attend to my spiritual concerns, and leave my corporeal cure to Mr. P. My illness continued for three months, but at last, through the untiring labours of Mr. Phillips, and under the Divine blessing, I was once more restored to health.

My apartments were every day besieged by numbers of kind friends, who called to ascertain the state of my health, and to leave me fruits, and such tokens of esteem as they thought most acceptable to an invalid.

I well remember that, at a period during the most dangerous part of my illness, I called to mind that, in my country, a superstition was prevalent, that the broth made from a young black cock, whose head must be severed by a knife with one stroke from the body, was very efficacious in curing such cases as mine; and my strict injunctions and earnest entreaties to those around

me to prepare me this broth, must have made them imagine me imbecile.

Before quitting this subject, I must here record my grateful thanks to Mr. Zohrab, the Turkish consul-general, and his lady, whose friendship and kindness to me upon all occasions I can never sufficiently acknowledge. On my partial recovery, they insisted on my taking up my abode at their mansion at Hampstead, and owing to their kind attentions and *recherché* fare, I soon recovered my strength.

The 12th of April, 1850, was one of the proudest days of my life. On that day I had the great honour of being admitted a member of the Royal College of Surgeons of London, and whilst yet blushing beneath my new honours, more came pouring upon my head. I went to King's College on the 27th of the same month to witness the distribution of prizes, and there I had the pleasure of meeting the amiable and learned professor, Doctor Jelf; from him I was surprised and delighted to learn, that, listening to his kind recommendation of my attention to studies and lectures, His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury had been graciously pleased to confer upon me the honour of being an associate of the college.

About this time, finding that my friend the Mir Shahamet Ali intended to visit the north of England, I availed myself of the opportunity and joined him in the excursion. This gentleman was the most remarkable stranger I have met with in England; he was a native of Delhi, where he received his education. The Mir was a most intelligent and learned man, and had travelled much in Bengal with Sir Claude Wade, whom he had accompanied to the Punjaub and Bahawalpur, when that gentleman went there for the purpose of

negociating with those States for throwing open the navigation of the Indus and the Sutledge. The Mir was afterwards sent with presents from the English Government to the court of Lahore, and he subsequently published, in English, two books, the "Sikhs and Affghans" and a "History of Bahawalpur," besides one or two little pamphlets on Indian affairs; he also long held the situation of *Mir Moonshee* in the upper provinces.

Perhaps I may here be allowed to give an anecdote illustrative of London *haut ton* and society, showing how scrupulous they are, and how a stranger may inadvertently fall into disrepute, and also, how easily a foreigner, by slight mistakes, may suffer severe consequences. I once, mistaking the designation of my friend, the Mir, introduced him at the houses of some religious fashionables as a prince, supposing the term Mir, in Hindustani, to be equivalent to the word Emir in Arabic. A friend told me that I had been accused of introducing myself as a prince, a circumstance arising, I suppose, from this incident.

But to return to the Mir, he came to this country to obtain a better insight into European manners and society. Her Majesty the Queen of England was graciously pleased to receive him, and he was presented at court by General Duncan Macleod of the Indian army, whose engineering talents have been so justly admired as exemplified in the splendid palace erected under his sole direction for the Nawab of Moorshedabad. During this presentation, a very pleasant incident occurred, illustrative to the Mir of the urbanity of Scottish aristocracy. Being very much struck with the splendid Highland costume of one of the gentlemen present, the Mir wished to be allowed to inspect it nearer, when



General Macleod, with characteristic amiability, apologetically explained to the object of his admiration how much his protégé, the oriental, was struck with his appearance. The chieftain very good-naturedly invited the Mir to approach, adding, "Perhaps you would like to see a chieftain's wife also," and forthwith introduced him to his lady, the Duchess of —.

As may readily be conceived, it was most agreeable for me to travel about with such a companion as the Mir. We visited all the manufacturing districts together. The Mir was indefatigable, active, enquiring, and desirous of obtaining knowledge in every acquirable shape. We proceeded to Birmingham, where we were received by our consul, Mr. Collis, and entertained at his house during our sojourn; he shewed us whatever sights in that wonderful town he deemed at all interesting to us. The various places we travelled through are so familiar to my English readers, that, to relate them all, would prove tedious. Suffice it that we got on very well together till we were one day leaving Sheffield for Edinburgh. At Sheffield we had nearly exhausted our funds in purchasing cutlery, etc., so that when we came to the railway-station we had not enough ready money between us to pay our fare onward to Edinburgh. We were, however, bearers of letters of credit, and stating our circumstances to the head booking-clerk, he kindly consented to allow us to proceed by the train on condition that we paid on arriving in Edinburgh. Accordingly we took our seats in the carriage, and began to condole with each other on the awkwardness of our position. There was only one other person besides ourselves in the carriage, and this gentleman, though a perfect stranger, kindly came forward and pressed upon us the use of his purse. After some

little altercation and hesitation, Mir Shahamet Ali and myself agreed to borrow five pounds of this worthy stranger on condition that we should be permitted to return it immediately after our arrival at Edinburgh. Our promise to pay was, as the reader may imagine, promptly met. This stranger proved to be Mr. Walker, the celebrated engineer, of Great George-street, and on returning from London to Scotland, I called to thank this estimable gentleman for his unsolicited kindness to myself and friend; and through this slight incident, I still enjoy his friendship and acquaintance.

While in Edinburgh, we were much delighted at our visit to Holyrood in its quiet and decayed grandeur—majestic with age—replete with tragic and romantic reminiscences. This impressed us much, and the whole aspect of Edinburgh, especially as viewed by night, struck us as singularly oriental, and we, in imagination, could with ease have conjured up some additions to the Arabian Nights. The dim outline of the castle on the rock—the old town, dark and confused beneath, whilst on the opposite height, row upon row of twinkling or brilliant lights flashed across the sight; these might have made one easily suppose that the grovelling creatures of earth inhabited the lower portion, guarded by some portentously frowning power; whilst above danced the fairies in their exquisite mother's light (called by the common people, “Bonnie Jumpers”); and in the new town dwelt the *Magi*, all illumination, life, light, and splendour. The hospitality and warmth of kindness of the Scotch to us strangers, was irresistibly gratifying, and we were most kindly entertained by many of them.

In our walks, the boys frequently screamed after and cheered us, loudly vociferating, *Ibrahim Pacha!* I

presume that they had heard of him, and imagined that every Oriental must be *the man*. The English almost invariably, even amongst the better classes, call everybody that weares a *fez* or *tarboush*, a *Turk*, much upon the same principle as our people class every one with a *hat* (*chapeau*), *Franji*, or a man from European countries, without distinction as to sect, creed, nationality, or the vast variety that exists amongst both people of government, laws, manners and histories. The English also have an idea that every one wearing a turban must be a follower of Mahomed. Apropos of this subject, I may here recount an anecdote which will doubtless amuse my readers.

One day when I was at the hospital, there was a woman waiting for a surgical operation to be performed. After explaining its nature, the surgeon, much to my delight, asked me to perform the needful operation. Up to this moment the woman was lying on a bed perfectly resigned, and with both hands clasped over her eyes. No sooner, however, did I take up the instruments, and draw near to perform the needful service, than she started up in bed, and glaring wildly at me with terror depicted in her countenance, and doubtless alarmed at my Oriental garb and beard, she screamed out with all her might, "The Turk! The Turk! The Turk is going to cut me!" Nor could any arguments of mine persuade her to submit to the operation at my hands.

My friend, Shahamet Ali, had for some time rented a cottage at Ryde, in the Isle of Wight, where on our return he invited me to pass a few days. I cordially accepted this invitation, and whilst at Ryde had the happiness of meeting Lord and Lady Downes, together with Sir Claude Wade and his amiable lady, from all of whom I received much kindness, which has not

ceased to this day. My visit to Ryde extended over a month, and my friend, Shahamet Ali, was during that time making his arrangements for a journey to Constantinople and thence to Mecca, which last place he visited for the express purpose of purifying himself, he having mixed so much with Christians that his religion required his pilgrimage thither. I accompanied him as far as Paris, where I left with him letters of introduction, and amongst them one to the venerable Emir Beschir Kasim at Constantinople.

We both were much pleased with the Parisians. No introduction was needed—our position in society was a passport everywhere. The French are so amiable, *au dévant de vous* ; perfect in grace, fascination and *toilette* ; more cheerful, and perhaps warmer-hearted than the English—but far less stable. A Frenchman may form a violent attachment to a person to-day, and to-morrow be wholly indifferent as to his whereabouts or welfare. An Englishman may be some months before he evinces the least symptoms of even a partiality ; but when a friendship really exists, you may count upon its sincerity and continuance.

I returned to London and remained for some time, when my good friend, Mahomed Pacha, being recalled to Constantinople, it was arranged that I should return to Paris and reside there, under the guidance of Prince Callimaki. Amongst others whose acquaintance I had the honour of making in France, was that of M. Lamartine, the great admirer of Lebanon, whom I had met in Syria. We were mutually pleased to renew our friendship. He wrote a very flowery letter to the Sultan Abdul Medjid, in which he said that having a map before him of all that mighty potentate's dominions, he had fixed upon a little spot

in Syria (Lebanon), whither he would wish to withdraw himself from the turmoil and strife of life to settle down; but the Turkish government, considering that the Maronites, who already possessed much influence through French protection, might choose him as their prince, consequently, in lieu of the small bit of ground begged for in Syria, presented him with an immense tract of fertile ground in Asia Minor, where the poet-statesman of France might sow every seed, save the seed of political discord, which in such a wilderness would never take root.



## CHAPTER IX.

## VISIT TO PARIS.

ORIENTALS who visit Paris for the first time are at a loss to conceive anything more magnificent than its streets and its palaces and gardens. After having been in England, however, their opinion is materially altered, though I must still admit that there are some striking features in Paris; amongst these, the Boulevards, Champs Elysées, Tuilleries, and the Luxembourg, are the most attractive. Of the greater part of the streets of Paris I can say but little; and there are some so filthy, narrow, and almost impassable, as to outstrip the meanest town in Turkey. Nothing but the uncouth wooden *sabots* of the French could at any season traverse them. Though I must acknowledge that nothing can surpass the easy elegance and refinement of the higher classes of society. It would appear, from what a poor countryman of mine told me, that the second-rate lodging-houses are miserable in the extreme. One would imagine, from his description that they went to the opposite extreme of luxury. Complaining bitterly of his fate, for he had all his life before been accustomed to opulent independance in Lebanon, he wrote to me the other day as follows, viz. :—

“The disagreeable first-impression made upon my mind on first taking possession of my lodgings here (Paris), was the melancholy resemblance existing

between my chimney-place and a Syrian church-yard, for I can assure you that its shape resembles exactly one of our ordinary tombstones. For the first few nights I hardly dared look at it before going to bed, lest I should have my rest broken by dreams of spectres and other horrid sprites of the imagination. In addition to its disagreeable appearance, it smokes so terribly that I dare not light a fire, though shivering with cold, lest I should lose my eyesight from the effects of the smoke; but this is not all; the door will not shut well, the floorings are of damp bricks, and the rooms are built without respect to proportion, elegance, or comfort. The house I am living in is eight stories high, and heigho! poor me, I live on the fourth floor, so that I have a hundred steps to mount up and down a dozen times a-day. The greatest nuisance of all is, that the street door is continually being left open, so that any one given to pilfering is at perfect liberty to walk up and down stairs and help himself to whatever the fates may throw in his way. There certainly is nominally a *concierge*. This old worthy, however, is either so engrossed with an old newspaper or so comfortably napping, that he is perfectly unconscious of all passing around him.

“I have vainly complained to him of this negligence, and pointed out the inconvenience and interruption I was perpetually being exposed to by people rapping at my door, under the pretext of inquiring if M. So-and-so lodged there, but evidently with the intention of finding out if there was any one within to hinder their forcing an entrance. His invariable reply used to be, ‘*Eh bien! que voulez vous que je fasse.*’ There are no bells, so that I may die in a fit, or be burnt to death before any assistance could be obtained.”

Such is the deplorable picture drawn by my poor friend, who on the other hand, lauds up to the skies lodgings of a similar class in London, and as he is a sharp, acute man, I have little doubt but that he is correct in his ideas.

What surprised me very much in Paris was the apparent ignorance of the French with regard to the cities and towns of the Holy Land. I forgot at that period that they were restricted from reading their Bibles, and that consequently very few of them were likely to have the names of places, and people familiar to the English and ourselves, so firmly impressed upon their minds. My appearance and costume never excited curiosity. When they asked me whence I came from, and I answered *Syria*, the word made no impression on them.

"Where is that?" said one man to another in my hearing.

"*Ma fois je ne sais pas vous dire*—unless it be some obscure village in Algeria which our colonists have not yet explored."

Of course the higher classes are not guilty of such ignorance, for who could have thrown a better light on the beauties and localities of Syria than the learned and amiable Lamartine, whose accurate work, *Souvenirs de l'Orient*, is deservedly popular over Europe.

I have many pleasant *souvenirs* of the friends I met in Paris. The hospitable *reunions* of His Excellency the Turkish ambassador—the kindness of the American representative, Mr. Rives,—the brilliant balls I was invited to by various families of fashion—and an adventure at the hotel V.—never to be forgotten, and which it is my intention at some future period to publish, which I have no doubt will interest many of

my English readers—all these I recall with pleasure, and I avail myself of this opportunity with gladness to thank my many friends in Paris for the courtesy and kindness I have ever met with at their hands. But putting these aside as elegant exceptions, I prefer on the whole England, and the friendship of an Englishman to that of a Frenchman,—the private character of the former has a sounder foundation, and they know how to appreciate real moral, domestic comfort and happiness, such as our countrymen seek for and find amongst the citron groves and gardens of Syria.

Now it can barely be said that a Frenchman knows what domestic bliss signifies, or that he has any real philosophic reflections and pleasures. With him the Café is a *sine quâ non* ; he may have an amiable and charming wife, a young and attractive family, every charm of domestic happiness that should link his heart and thoughts with home, and draw him towards it as the only true and rational source of enjoyment ; but he leaves all these, and looks upon them as insipid ; his sole delight is to wander about from café to café, varying his amusements by an occasional game at billiards or a *petit verre*, else he strays from theatre to operas, from operas to balls, and some of the wealthier classes live for weeks, and sometimes months, in the country in the strictest seclusion, practising an economy amounting to penuriousness, in order that they may, on their return to town, be enabled to gratify this passion. The wives of these gentlemen, continually deserted, left to themselves, and naturally of a gay turn, which in many instances arises from neglect of a proper moral education, form those *liaisons* with others, which are publicly known and talked about with the utmost

*nonchalance*, and which, in my humble opinion, are an outrage to the name of Christianity, and a disgrace to a nation acknowledged in every other respect to stand high in the scale of civilisation. I cannot describe what a painful effect it has upon the mind of Syrian strangers to witness such things countenanced in France; they leave the country with very poor opinions of its civilisation—poorer still of its Christianity; and they disseminate these opinions amongst our own people on their return to Syria; hence it arises that oftentimes the poorer and more ignorant inhabitants of Syria, who cannot distinguish one European nation from another, but who set all down under the head of Franks, and suppose all to be of one creed and manner of thinking, are apt to imagine that the English are only next-door to infidels, and consequently a people to be feared, if not entirely avoided; but this is an error which I will occupy myself to rectify, as soon as I can find time to distribute tracts in Syria descriptive of the laws, manners, customs, and religions, of the different European nations of Europe.

But to return to the French, or rather the middle classes of the French. I found it almost invariably the case that should a Frenchman invite you to a *café*, he does so in the full expectation that you in your turn will give him a treat. His character is inconsistency personified—he is fickle and capricious—he enters freely into conversation with you, and lets you into all his secrets during the first five minutes of his acquaintance, and he entertains you with a string of personal adventures. With him every one is *mon cher ! mon brave ! mon ami !* He could kiss and hug you on parting, and swears eternal fidelity. The next day his ardour has cooled—the third he restricts



himself to a bow—the fourth, and he mingles with the crowd—and you never meet him again perhaps in a life time.

For a ball-room society give me Paris—for a quiet untiring friend, give me England. And of the two my heart prefers the latter.

From France I travelled to Vienna. After delivering my letters to the minister in that city, I proceeded to Constantinople. On arriving there I took up my abode with my old friend the Emir Sayid, the grandson of the Emir Beschir.

## CHAPTER X.

## IMPRESSIONS OF ENGLAND.

MANY of my fair friends have been exceedingly anxious for me to give them my first impressions of England. After so long a residence in the country, I must confess my habits have become completely Anglicised; I have, however, the pleasure of offering them a translation of portions of some letters written to a friend at Constantinople during my first visit to England:—

“You asked me, before leaving Stamboul, to convey to you as well as I could by letter, my first impressions of England and the English. Your Excellency can hardly conceive the difficulty of the task which you have allotted me. However arduous the undertaking may be, I shall endeavour, to the best of my poor abilities, to satisfy your curiosity, and fulfil my rash promise. In our own dear village, and indeed in the most active and bustling towns of Syria, the silence and monotony of the houses are only occasionally broken in upon by the busy hum of human

voices—the clattering hoofs of horses and mules—the braying of donkeys, and the merry tinkling bell of the caravan. The sweet song of the bulbul and other summer birds, with the buzzing of the honey-bee, are the familiar sounds to which we are from our infancy accustomed. Stately forest trees—mountains and hills—valleys and dales—citron groves and orchards—the bright plumage of birds and the painted wings of butterflies are the every-day pictures, furnished by the hand of nature, and on which alone our eyes have been content to dwell. The sound of chariot wheels have through centuries been hushed and sunk into oblivion, together with the fiery-spirited warriors that guided them. Such is the quiet state of affairs in our own loved country Syria. Now, therefore, imagine yourself blindfolded and transported as though by magic into the very centre of the city of London.

“Previously, however, a vast extent of ocean has to be traversed, which is accomplished in an incredibly short space of time, during which period much suffering from sea-sickness is to be expected, and many are compelled to keep to their cabins, creeping only upon deck occasionally to cheer the heart with a distant glimpse of land, as Malta and Gibraltar have appeared to view, and as speedily vanished from sight, leaving, like the false mirage, no trace behind. At last the shores of *Inglaterra* are discerned. The announcement is heard with indescribable delight, for the term of purgatory is about to expire. Well wrapped in a *burnoos*, for, although midsummer, the air is keen, you scramble upon deck, and being comfortably seated, take a first survey of the famed shores of Britain. As far as the eye can stretch the whole land appears to be what is really the case, in a high state of cultivation.

Houses and windmills innumerable meet the view, and a vast number of smoking minarets, which on inquiry prove to be the chimneys of countless factories. But you are not left long to consider these matters—what is occurring in the more immediate vicinity of the steamer rivets your attention. Thousands of vessels of all sizes, shapes, and nations, are moving up and down the channel. Gigantic men-of-war steamers—still larger mail-packets, ships-of-the-line, frigates, sloops, gun-brigs, Indiamen, schooners, barks, boats, all puffing and sailing, pitching and rolling, and getting entangled with one another in the most alarming manner. Frenchmen shouting and screaming to fishing-boats—Italians stamping at pilots—Greeks throwing their red caps overboard, pulling their hair in despair at not being able to make themselves understood. In short, the confusion of this Babel of tongues is so great that you stand and look on stupified and bewildered with amazement, and so overcome with alarm and the novelty of the thing, that you have ceased to watch the ship's progress till the anchor is down, and you find yourself in the custom-house surrounded by boxes and inquisitive people, whilst thunder seems to be rolling along the streets outside.

“A kind friend passes your baggage through the custom-house and hurries you into a cab, so imbecile and helpless have you become. If you had eyes all round your head, they would not suffice to look at the people and the sights in the streets. Thousands of people are pushing and running, and shouting and walking, in every direction; hundreds of carriages, three and four abreast, blocking up every thoroughfare. Now come waggons and carts of every description, omnibuses innumerable, and cabs; all these being the *arabaz*, or

wheeled conveyances, varying in size, shape, and colour, the number of wheels on which they move, and the number of horses by which they are drawn; some conveying mountains of bale goods, others laden with beer-barrels, whilst some are exclusively for the use of passengers. The noise created by these numerous vehicles jolting over the hard roads is greater than the roar of the sultan's artillery. What are all these people come out to see?—is your first natural enquiry. Is there a fire, or has there been an earthquake, or are all the suburban villages and towns pouring in their multitudes to witness some grand spectacle? You are inclined to doubt your friend when he tells you that this is an every-day occurrence in London; but experience proves him to be correct. *Wallah yar effendem*. If Stamboul were in flames, and all the Sultan's harem burning, there could not be a greater concourse of people than may every day be encountered, between the hours of three and five, in one single street of London, and all the other hundred streets are almost equally well filled. Men, women, and children, all busy, all intent on some errand or occupation. Perhaps few, if any, of the vast crowd you encounter have come out simply for air and exercise. The reason for all this is, that London is a very dear city, talent plentiful, occupation scarce, so that every one is obliged to depend upon his own individual active exertions to enable him to procure even a crumb of bread. *Inshallah Būkera* (to-morrow, please God) is a phrase wholly disregarded in England, and not to be found in an Englishman's vocabulary. If you were to put off till tomorrow what might be done to-day, you would find yourself a beggar.

“The English run a race with time; and though they



cannot catch and overtake him, they keep close upon his heels. An old merchant dies at eighty, who, from the age of eleven or twelve, has been hard at work six days in every week from ten in the morning till four in the evening, amassing wealth, leaving riches, a good name, and a vast inheritance behind him. That man has made more use of his time than five hundred of the most active of our countrymen; and there are a thousand instances of such as these to be met with in the city.

“But whilst we have been thinking about this, the cab stops opposite to a splendid *seraiyah*, a veritable palace. You imagine that this must be the Queen’s residence, and begin to expostulate with your friend for ushering you into the presence of royalty before you have had time to pay some attention to your toilet; he laughs at your ignorance. Two gentlemen, handsomely dressed and without hats, rush into the street and officiously carry in your luggage. You are quite shocked to see the nobility thus debased, and struggle with them to relieve them of their burden. The friend again interferes, and you find, to your amazement, that the palace is nothing more than a large *khan* for the accommodation of wealthy travellers, and that the two gentlemanly-looking men are *khudâmeen*, and that there are at least a dozen more, all in the same capacity, all as well dressed and as good-looking. You are then ushered into a room splendidly furnished; mirrors and chandeliers, tables and chairs, pictures and divans, all in profusion, and the commonest article in the room worth at least one thousand piastres. Your friend touches a spring, a bell rings in the distance, the door opens, and a *houri* enters. This must be the lady of the palace; but she is young and tender as a dove, and blushes like the rose of

Damascus in acknowledging your *salams*. Alas! even this beautiful creature is one of the *khudâmeen*, and you sigh to hear your friend order her to bring up a scuttle of coals, whose black dust cannot but soil her snowy and taper-like fingers. It takes you a good week to settle down into anything like peace and comfort, or to get accustomed to the ways of the place and the hours for eating and sleeping. It takes you a month to reconcile yourself to the perpetual roaring and din in the streets, occasioned by the countless vehicles passing and repassing in the streets.

“At last, however, you feel tired of being shut up alone, and ordering a carriage, step into it, and bid the driver take you to one of the fashionable drives. You go on at a rapid pace for a few hundred yards, and then there is a dead halt; vexed at this, you stand up in the carriage to endeavour to discover the cause, and then a sight meets the view quite sufficient to paralyse a stranger. In front, as far as the sight can reach; and behind, as far as the eye can see, as well as as on either side of you, is one dense forest of human beings, horses, donkeys, carts, carriages, waggons, chimney-sweeps. Officers, lords and ladies, policemen and rabble. You move slowly along as though you were in a funeral procession, until a favourable opportunity presents itself for the coachman to display his skill, and then he dashes at full speed through carriages, and carts, so close together that none but his experienced eye could ever have imagined it possible to squeeze one’s way through uninjured. Expecting every instant to be crushed to death, you throw yourself back in the carriage, and shut your eyes on what was too fearful to look upon. By-and-by the easier motion of the carriage re-assures you—you look up, you have been

disentangled from the dense crowd, and are driving along in comparative solitude through street after street of magnificent palaces. By-and-by, you pass through a square, and the verdure of a few trees comes like a refreshing shower to the seared up heart, and recalls to mind the lovely home of our ancestors in Lebanon. After awhile we emerge from the turmoil and smoke, and dust of the city, and lo ! before you, a magnificent garden—such a one as the Pacha of Damascus would be proud of. Real, fine, stately trees, and plenty of grass—plots of flowers, and imitation rivers and lakes, covered too with wild ducks, and geese, and numberless other water fowl, now become so domesticated however, that you see them running out of the water at the approach of little children who carry baskets full of crumbs to feed them with.

“ Here, in roads railed, off the fashionable world drive and ride about for a few hours every evening in the season. A carriage passes with two *houris* in it, whose faces leave an impression on your heart, which latter is as malleable as wax. Another carriage, and two still more beautiful—a few minutes afterwards three pass at the same moment, with such eyes that the glances from them emit brilliant sparks of love ; but there is no end to the *houris* and no end to the heart-aches, so we bid the driver speed home again, and close our eyes, firmly determined not to be exposed to any fresh onslaught from these *houris*—these daughters of the finest people in the world. Arrived at home, dinner is served in magnificent style. The silver dishes, and the knives and forks—the spoons, etc., would alone suffice to purchase a property in Lebanon that would yield you or me, a comfortable revenue for life ; and as the thought strikes me, I sicken at the waste and

splendour whilst millions are starving in the world; and though the dishes are excellent and rare, and well chosen, I would willingly resign them all for one good Syrian *pillaf*, and the pleasure of a *chibuk*, and a few minutes' chat with your Excellency.

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“NOTHING is more difficult than for a stranger to form acquaintances in London, unless he is furnished with good letters of introduction, or holds an official position. In the latter case, his rank at once entitles him to the *entrée* of a certain circle of society. Being the guest of a nobleman or some notable man, is a passport into the society of his list of acquaintances; and once having been introduced, your number of friends is rapidly augmented. Thus, supposing I dine at Mr. P—’s to-day, there, amongst others, I meet Mr. W—. This gentleman invites me to his house, and there I find an entirely new set, who, in their turn, again introduce me to their friends and acquaintances. English ladies are the stars of English society. The married and elder ladies I may term the planets; their destinies are fixed, and they are placed in one particular position for life; but true to this theory, like planets, they emit flashes of brilliant light; their language is refined, their manners fascinating, their bearing commanding respect, their conversation agreeable and instructive, and their wit brilliant and full of pith. The young ladies are the satellites that revolve round these planets, more brilliant in the pride of youth and beauty, more active, and much gayer; their hearts would hardly counter-

balance a feather. Poor doves ! affliction and the trials of life have as yet no stamp on the soft waxwork texture of their sensitive affections ; they talk and laugh, and ride and dance with young men without the least restraint, and the voice of calumny is never heard. How different from our poor, ignorant countrymen ! What would all the old men and women of Lebanon say, if their daughters and granddaughters were seen taking long solitary rides and walks with the young men ? With us, in the present uncivilised state of affairs, such liberties would be highly improper ; but it is vastly different in England and Europe, where men and women are, from early childhood, educated with the strictest attention to morality as well as accomplishments. Girls of fifteen have sufficient confidence in their own strength of mind, and in the integrity and high honour of those with whom they associate, ever to feel embarrassed in the society of young men, though these young men be comparative strangers ; they know themselves to be ladies, and that their associates are gentlemen ; and in England these two words comprise everything that is virtuous and honourable.

“The smallest deviation from the rigid path of religious virtue or worldly honour is visited with the severest penalty, and the delinquent is irrevocably lost, and for ever excluded from the pale of society. With such a punishment hanging over their heads, apart from the natural instinct to virtue, a *faux-pas* is rare indeed amongst the highest classes of society.

“Ladies are the leading features ; many of them are renowned for great literary acquirements ; most are accomplished ; and the highest honours are inwardly awarded them by the opposite sex. If a lady enters a



room, all the gentlemen rise from their seats, nor will they be seated again until she has chosen one for herself. If a lady drops a handkerchief, the men all rush to pick it up, so as to save her the trouble of stooping; when she speaks, all are attentive; and when she sings and plays, the whole company are hushed into such profound silence, that you might hear a pin drop.

“When dinner, supper, or whatever the repast may be, is announced, the master of the house leads out the lady highest in rank present, the others being handed out by respective gentlemen; the lady of the house remaining till the last, when she is conducted to the refreshment-room by the gentleman of the highest rank present. In England men and women usually wear no covering on the head whilst indoors, with the exception, however, of *matrons*, who wear caps made of some elegant lace material, and *widows* who, according to custom, put on *weeds* for a certain period after the husband's decease. *Weeds* means a peculiar cap, composed of white muslin, in shape both ugly and unbecoming. Notwithstanding this, my friend Mrs. D—, who is a widow, ever looks charming and beautiful. But to return to the dinner; when it is finished the ladies, at a given sign from the mistress of the house, rise and leave the table. The gentlemen remain seated for about half-an-hour longer, during which interval they sip their wine, eat fruit and converse. In England they offer wine and meat in abundance, but *water* and *bread* is but scantily supplied. No smoking is allowed within doors, nor is it genteel to smoke in the streets—or even to smell of smoke when you enter the society of ladies. Gentlemen who are fond of tobacco, have regular smoking rooms, or go to their clubs to indulge in a cigar; but the majority eschew smoking altogether. Our nation labour under a very false impression in

supposing that the English are a people with very few ideas of religion ; and in imagining that because they do not observe fasts and festivals, and cross themselves, they are almost worse than infidels. In no country is the Sabbath more strictly or rigorously regarded than in England. Not only are the shops and places of public entertainment closed on that holy day, but in some families in England even cooking is not allowed. The churches and chapels are literally crowded with well-dressed men and women twice a day. And there are many families that attend Divine service once or twice a week. Besides this, they support many splendid charitable institutions, hospitals for the sick and maimed, poor-houses for the paupers, foundlings for the unfortunate, and in fact, have institutions for the relief of every description of disease and infirmity to which human nature is subject. Nor must I omit to mention the public schools, and colleges for children of both sexes, where thousands are clothed, housed, fed and educated at the public expense, and where they will receive instruction that will fit them for any sphere ; besides these, there are also innumerable private charities, and her Majesty the Queen herself, takes the lead in distributing large bounties annually in the cold winter time—fuel, clothing, blankets, and many other requisites to the friendless and needy. Nor is it only for the temporal welfare of others that they exert themselves. Missionary establishments are supported by voluntary contributions, and the annual revenue or income of these institutions, consisting of millions of piastres, is expended in supporting missionaries and schools at home and abroad. Ladies and gentlemen who die worth immense fortunes, leaving no heirs to inherit, bequeath the bulk of their fortunes towards the furtherance of charitable objects.

“There are merchants in London, and in some of the other principal towns in Great Britain, who are in possession of princely fortunes, and they always go on augmenting their wealth by any feasible scheme for the improvement of commerce—such as the laying on of a new line of steamers, or the construction of railroads. Schemes that require millions of money as a first outlay, and before any profits can be hoped to be realised, are discussed with the utmost *sang-froid* by the merchants *on Change*, that is, at a large, elegant building, set aside and built expressly for merchants to congregate and transact business. If the scheme is approved of to-day by a number of leading merchants, and the sum requisite be five millions sterling, by this day fortnight, at latest, the money is contributed and safely lodged in the banker’s hands. Such, *Marshallah*! is the expeditious method adopted by English merchants, the richest commoners of the richest kingdom in the world.

“The fashionable world of London has fashionable hours for everything. Ladies sometimes do not get up before mid-day, and then usually breakfast in their private apartments, and not unfrequently in bed. The afternoon is the fashionable time for receiving visits; they dine when, in our country, people are thinking of going to bed; and this is not all, for, by the time that the so of Lebanon’s first refreshing siesta may be said to be over, these people are thinking about amusing themselves for the night. At about ten o’clock, fashionable evening parties commence. Some people are invited to four or five of these in the same evening, and they may perhaps go to all, remaining but a few minutes at each. Ladies and gentlemen dance till past midnight. Bands of delightful music are playing; the rooms are arranged like fairy land; the girls are so beautiful, and dressed so elegantly, that the whole scene is like a realisation

of the fabulous tales of the Arabian Nights. Then there is also the opera, where professional singers and dancers are employed; and the magnificence with which the stage is decorated, the lights, the music, the dancing—so airy that the girls barely touch the ground with their toes. All is as a scene of magic enchantment, till the curtain drops amidst thunders of applause, and you are led out by your friends in a state of mental aberration. The next morning you awake, and look over your last night's expenditure, and you find a few such items as the following:—

	£	s.	d.	Piastres.
Grapes (ten paras' worth in Syria).....	0	10	0	= 55
Opera-ticket .....	1	1	0	= 110
Supper, Cab-hire, etc. ....	1	11	6	= 165
				<hr/>
Total .....				330

“Three hundred and thirty piastres for a few hours' entertainment! Such is but a trifling instance of the daily expenditure accruing in London, this great mart which offers such numberless enticements to spend money; but, on the other hand, few, if any, places in the world present greater opportunities for amassing wealth. The very atmosphere of this great city seems to infect its inhabitants with an insatiable desire of becoming rich; such is, indeed, my own case, and it will be my constant endeavour to gain such a fortune as shall entitle me to be the enviable possessor of an English home, and become a domesticated man, and at the same time enable me to forward the interests of my own dear country, by contributing to the construction of hospitals, schools, etc., where my brethren and ‘the stranger that sojourneth in the land’ may receive relief.”

“MEN in this country seldom think of marrying before they are thirty or forty years old; girls never before they are sixteen; but I must mention one thing which will rather surprise and amuse your excellency. Children, especially daughters, are excluded from society until they are thoroughly educated, and considered by their parents fit to make their *début*. You may visit and dine continually at a house, without being aware that there are any children under the same roof. When young, they are kept almost exclusively in the nursery under charge of a governess and nursery-maids. When old enough to go to school, they are sent off to these establishments, rarely coming home, except in cases of sickness or for the holidays, and even then they are seldom permitted to dine at the same table, or keep the same hours as their parents when there is company. Fancy a Syrian mother being separated from her children for months, and not seeing them, though easily within reach; knowing that her sons, if disobedient or naughty, have no mercy to expect from the school-master, no sparing of the rod, or of heavy tasks either; and that her daughters may be going supperless to bed, for some trivial offence against the schoolmistress, whilst she, the mother, is supping sumptuously. If you tell them that this seems unnatural and cruel, their reply is, that they went through it themselves; but you will barely credit what I write, when I tell you, that there are many instances where mothers of young families, seldom see or enquire after their offspring more than once a day, sometimes not so often, and even sometimes they go out of town for a week or ten days, leaving these troublesome incumbrances to the tender mercies of a nursery-maid. What would our mothers have said, if any one had suggested to them,



that it would be best to place us under the care of servant-maids? Would they ever have tasted food before they knew that we were served, or rested till they had wrenched the cane from the hand of the schoolmaster, torn his beard, and carried us away home?

“However great the Western Europeans are, they cannot, in general, be said to possess that attachment and love which binds and links most oriental families together. I must here mention that beards are at a sad discount in England; moustaches hooted at, or only used by military men. Alas! for the reverence paid to the long beards of Syria. The possessors of such in this country would be set down as Jews; they are considered inconvenient, unsightly, and not reckoned as contributing to cleanliness. I knew a Frank in Syria, a Hakim, whose flowing beard was the admiration of all beholders; his patients used to seize it and make him swear by it, that he would do his best to cure them; and as for the damsels, happy was she that could make him vow fidelity to her, on the strength of his beard. Well, your excellency, I met this Hakim in the streets of London. I knew him not; but he recognised me and spoke to me. The cruel razor had been at work, and his face was as smooth and beardless as the new-born babe. I asked him what had caused him to commit such an act of insanity, and he told me that, when he first landed, the children in the streets hooted, pelted him, and cried out “Halloo Moshes!” and so, for quietness’ sake, he was obliged to submit his beautiful beard to the hands of a ruthless barber. In England no one wears beards. Bishops are beardless; Cadis are beardless; lawyers, hakims, even the solicitors;—wonderful indeed! but what is still more wonderful

and absurd is, that these great men wear long, curly wigs, which vastly resemble the sheepskins worn by our buffoons and tale-tellers.

“Young ladies in this country are devotedly attached to handsome uniforms; and fine uniforms are devotedly attached to handsome fortunes as well as faces. Sometimes young officers elope with heiresses worth millions of money, whereas the officer, perhaps, has nothing but a gay uniform and a good-looking face and figure to shew: but in all cases, young ladies are very fond of red and blue coats; and an officer in the guards is irresistible. Even the beadle, that is, the *Indilaft*, is an object of admiration to the lower classes, as he struts about in his gold-laced cocked-hat and uniform.

“It may of a truth be said of the English, that they strive with each other in their efforts to oblige a stranger, and heap civilities and attentions upon him. With them it is a matter of earnest regret that any foreign friend should find cause of complaint against any of their countrymen. One great advantage that we Syrians possess, is the very fact of coming from the Holy Land. Say to an Englishman, of whatever grade, “I am a Syrian,” and he will immediately know how to appreciate your worth, and the excellence of your country; he will talk to you of Hebron and many other towns with unabating pleasure; and the reason is, that, from his infancy upwards, with him Syria has been a familiar household word; as a lisping infant, he has read at his mother’s knee of King Solomon and the cedars of Lebanon. At school, his prize-essays have been about Jerusalem; and if, mayhap, he is a poor man, unable to write or read, still, from the pulpit, he has long been accustomed to hear of the great patriarch, the prophets, and the kings, of Israel, the temple of

Solomon, and other marvellous facts so intimately linked with his creed; the scene of all which was Syria and the Holy Land. Though most true that it is not an easy matter to cultivate the acquaintance of an Englishman, still, when you do once become acquainted with him, and are well known to him, then you are his friend in the true acceptance of that term, and you continue his friend for life, whether you remain in England or go abroad (I have found this by experience). Moreover he takes a pride in introducing you to his own circle of acquaintances, and endeavours, in concert with them, to promote your best interests and welfare; he abides by you as your friend during your absence, and if anything should reach his ears derogatory to your character, his best energies are brought into play; he sifts the matter thoroughly, hushes the voice of calumny, or exposes the infamy of the calumniator; and if perchance you are guilty in his opinion of any breach of etiquette or a misdemeanour, he weighs the matter maturely in his own mind, and is as ready to correct and reprimand, as he is to overlook the offence, and set it down to the score of your being a stranger, and necessarily uninitiated in the strict etiquette of the land.

The English do a good action solely from a wish to do good, and from no other earthly inducement. I am now speaking of Englishmen as individuals, for, when acting in numbers, I must confess I do not hold so high an opinion of them. This is proved by the many companies continually advertised and puffed up before the public, but which are nothing more or less than a hoax to catch the unwary, invented by unprincipled men, of which I myself have more than once been the dupe.

## CHAPTER XI.

## STAY AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

EVEN at this distance of time, my spirit is filled with melancholy, when I think of that kind friend with whom I passed the greater portion of my time whilst at Constantinople: perhaps a description of one evening spent in his society may be of interest.

The Emir Sayed—a wreck of greatness, whose fond dream of life's realities can only find an echo in the past—the shattered fragment of one born to command—second only to a supreme sovereign—he is a helpless broken-hearted man, supported on the alms of those who could once barely claim the high honour of admission into his presence. So much does misfortune level the creatures of the Creator—so great the fall from a princely estate to a beggarly dependence; thank God, however, even the gloomiest hours of existence, a light, however feeble, of the brighter hopes of life, breaks in upon the soul like an April sunbeam, and chases from its darkened caverns all the moist drops of a tearful heart. It was thus with the Emir Sayed. His favorite resort in Constantinople was a *café*, where of an evening, furnished with a *chibūk* and a cup of coffee, he would sit, surrounded by his most intimate friends, and listen from hour to hour to the marvellous or amusing tales told there nightly by professional tale-tellers. On such occasions it was a privilege to me to accom-

pany the fallen prince, for, besides the instruction I derived in learning *au fond* the technicalities of the Turkish language, I learnt a lesson in the experiences of life—how to bear up against misfortunes like a man—how to bow the head to the will of Providence, and submit to what might appear a calamity, and still doubtless might be intended as a safeguard or a blessing to him, whom the Great Benefactor has seen fit to surround with troubles, lest his soul should stray from the narrow path of righteousness.

We will now, by the reader's permission, fancy ourselves threading the narrow streets of the Turkish capital, following a servant, who carries a fannar, or lantern. At length we reach the *café*. A thousand lights, strung upon every conceivable hook, lend their enlivening brilliancy to light up the *salon*; the open space in front is filled with attentive auditors, all seated on diminutive stools or carpets, all silent, all sedate, mostly wearing beards, and every one smoking or sipping his coffee. We pass through a kind of human alley. We enter the coffee-shop: the seat at the furthest end—the seat of honour—is always reserved for the Emir. "He is a Bey still, and also a stranger."

At length we are all seated, all served, and the amusements of the evening commence; the violin and the guitar, both have been tuned, and the first piece commences: a short symphony of lively music, and then the bard of the company sings a song, of which the following is a specimen:—

Breeze of the West, I pray thee roam  
Toward my moon-faced lady's home  
To her my flight forlorn declare,  
Tittle by tittle, hair by hair.



Parted from thee, thou form of grace,  
My heart hath been grief's dwelling-place ;  
And love has drawn my wandering feet,  
From grove to grove, from street to street.

My heart when bent on beauty's chase,  
Ne'er found so sweet a form and face ;  
Although with roving step it went,  
From house to house, from tent to tent.

While others smile, and play, and flirt,  
This bleeding heart bemoans its hurt,  
Like a young rose, blood-stain'd with grief,  
Petal by petal, leaf by leaf.

The garden where I loved to trace,  
Sweet blooming flowers in thy face,  
How *low* and *dead* all gardens seem,  
Alley by alley, stream by stream.

Sweet jasmine-bosomed love,—I pray  
Fondly to heaven by night and day,  
Once more to see that form and face,  
Lip pressed to lip, and face to face.

Of all the garden flowers that be,  
Why is the rose most dear to me ?  
'T is that it's like thy heart so true,  
Odour to odour, hue to hue.

Though far from Allah's loving sight,  
The Fates have borne my soul's delight ;  
Go, Western Breeze, this message bear,  
Where'er thou art, my heart is there !

The song is no sooner concluded, narghilies, pipes and coffee handed round, than the story-teller's abilities are called into requisition, and he tells us the story of

#### “ THE TAILOR AND THE SULTAN.

“ Formerly when Baghdad was flourishing, when great men sometimes condescended to sink themselves to a

level with the common herd of mankind, there lived and reigned the Sultan Houssein. He was a famous man and a just judge, but rather eccentric withal. As his Grand Vizier had, on more than one occasion, given him cause of dissatisfaction, he was determined at any cost to get the cleverest man in the kingdom to perform the duties of that office ; but he resorted to a curious trial of their talent. A proclamation was issued, that the sultan offered the highest dignity in the empire to him amongst his subjects, who should be able satisfactorily to perform what he should require ; on the other hand, the penalty in case of failure being, that the man so failing should forfeit his head. Under such circumstances, the aspirants were not over numerous, but still there were not wanting ambitious men, who were willing to place their heads in danger for the attainment of a position, which perhaps they least of any of the people of the country were fitted for. At last, a presumptuous tailor offered himself as a candidate, and was in due course ushered into the presence of royalty. The poor maker of garments found the sultan reclining on a carpet ; and, hanging on a nail in the wall of the room, was a solitary counterpane ; and in this counterpane the solution of the whole of the difficulty lay—the task being to cover the sultan entirely over with it. When the tailor first tried, to his consternation he found it too short by two good spans. He then suggested that another should be introduced ; but the sultan laughed and hooted at the idea. At last a bright notion flashed across the tailor. He had long been accustomed to the nefarious art of cabbaging, so he set his inventive faculties to work, to find out how he could best cabbage a piece from the length of the sultan's

body, or, in other words, reduce it into as small a compass as could possibly be effected. Bethinking himself luckily of a little cane he usually carried in his girdle, he first covered the sultan's head, his feet remaining uncovered; he removed the embroidered slippers, and stealthily bringing out his cane, caught the sultan a severe blow across the soles of his feet, that he involuntarily tucked them up, thus drawing himself into a sufficiently small compass, and the tailor, availing himself of this circumstance, instantly tucked the counterpane round him, and thus effectually succeeded in entirely covering him, at the same time telling him he must always take care to stretch his legs according to his covering."

With songs and stories, such as I have given above, the time passes until nine o'clock, at which hour most of those assembled take their departure; and the unfortunate Emir, attended as when he arrived, returns to his disconsolate dwelling to talk over the misfortunes of other days.

Perhaps here it would not be out of place, to show the fallacy of the opinions usually entertained in Western Europe as to the state of things in Turkey. People talk of the fanaticism of the Turks; and in England more especially they seem to entertain an innate terror of the very name of Turk. Anything ferocious, anything ugly, and black, and dingy, is called "like a Turk." Now what can undeceive this excessive ignorance better than the conduct of the present amiable and excellent Sultan, on the occasion of the marriage of the daughter of the Prince Etienne Vogiredis. (Prince Etienne was a native of Walachia, but of later years residing at Constanti-

nople, and in high favour with the Sultan, who for a long time had been accessible to the prince at any hour; he had been ambassador at Athens, and a faithful servant of the sultan for the whole of his life. One of his daughters is married to our present respected ambassador in London, and it is not necessary for me to inform the reader of the manifold virtues and amiable qualities of this lady; but her father's excellence was such as has obtained for him a notoriety and honour unrivalled in the annals of Mahomedan history. When I was last at Constantinople, a daughter of the prince, a younger sister of our ambassadress, was married to a wealthy gentleman.) To the astonishment and intense gratification of every one present, His Majesty the Sultan attended with his mother at the ceremonial, a most unprecedented act of courtesy, and one least of all to be expected in Turkey, where the extreme fanaticism supposed to exist between the two creeds would, we might have imagined, have raised an insurmountable barrier. By departing on occasions such as these from the strict rules and regulations of the Mahomedan code, and by disregarding the reproachful remonstrances of the Ulemas, who are the most determined advocates of perfect uniformity to their doctrines, Sultan Abdul Medjid has evinced a strong desire to introduce a thorough social reform into his kingdom, and he has hereby conciliated the good will and gained the affection of many of his non-Mahomedan subjects.

Owing to the ignorance which prevails in Europe on the subject of Turkey, a great outcry is frequently made by many persons about events which occur in that country, without for one moment taking into consideration the difference in the temperament of the people,

arising from their Asiatic origin. One great cause of surprise, is the sudden rise of individuals in comparatively indigent circumstances to places of great power. When, however, it is considered that the Orientals view the various grades of society in another light to the Western Europeans, the sudden aggrandisement of individuals from the lower classes will cease to be a matter of surprise. In Turkey, men of the noblest birth mix indiscriminately with all ranks, and he who is possessed of wealth, talent, or interest, may rise to offices of the greatest trust; and, as "knowledge is power," I can see no reason why talent should not be brought into the notice which it merits. As a proof of the justice and benefit accruing from this system, I may adduce the case of a Capitan Pasha, whose station in life was very humble, but, being gifted with more than ordinary abilities, he was promoted to the chief command of the Turkish fleet, which was never better managed than whilst under his control. Other instances of a similar character are of frequent occurrence, more particularly in the subordinate departments of the home service. A favorite eunuch, or the brother of a Georgian or Circassian concubine or wife, has had honours suddenly and most unexpectedly showered upon him in the civil and military service; and there are at this date many pashas of both services, who owe their rise to similar unforeseen but fortuitous circumstances. It is true, many of these can neither read nor write, but they are possessed of great power of discernment, and are accompanied by two or three individuals who possess sufficient education, to carry out the views of their leader in a becoming manner. A good secretary, generally an Armenian, is an indispensable requisite.



The evil arises here in the choice of the subordinates ; who if he be of a bigotted and selfish turn of mind, the benevolent intentions of the government are but imperfectly carried out, or frustrated in spite of the most strenuous efforts.

Sultan Abdul Medjid, and his ministers, deserve the highest credit for the various attempts which have at different times been made, to introduce a thorough reform into the financial system of the Porte. It is undoubtedly a herculean task, for I do not believe that there has ever existed in any country in the world, so perfect and general a system of corruption, extortion, and rapacity on the part of the inferior officials. Though not oppressive in themselves, the taxes levied upon the people have, in consequence, become an intolerable yoke. Every village and individual taxed generally pays much more than the legitimate amount ordered to be levied by the government. The emirs and district governors, the sheikhs, kekhiachs, and heads of the tribes, live upon the villagers, and oblige the poor tenant-farmers to furnish their establishments with horses, servants, and practice fifty other extortions. To meet these urgent exactions, the poor villagers are obliged annually to raise loans guaranteed on the ensuing season's crops at a most usurious rate of interest, as high as from twenty-five to thirty-five and forty per cent. per annum, either from wealthy Jews, Armenians, or Greeks, and formerly even many of the dragomans of the different European consulates took advantage of this state of things, and fattened upon the misfortunes and miseries of the poor peasants, over whom they rode roughshod. The existence of so terrible an evil could not long remain unknown to the inquiring mind of the Sultan, and though

his sources of correct information have necessarily been meagre, he acquired an insight into it, sufficient to convince him of the necessity for a change. Accordingly, he ordered certain taxes to be abolished, others to be reduced; and he, above all, is endeavouring to organise an honest and simple system of collection. He has been foiled to a great extent in his attempts to effect the latter; and hence may be derived the clearest and simplest explanation of the financial embarrassments of his government. *Apropos* of this, I may quote from the letter of a friend, which has just come to hand.

“Everybody seems to imagine that the speedy downfall of Turkey is inevitable, that its doom is all but sealed, and that she is passing as rapidly as she can into the hands of Russia. But it ought to be well known in western Europe, that the so-much-talked-of balance of power in the East, cannot be thus so easily or so recklessly sacrificed by the two great powers, England and France. The jealousy of these powers is a sufficient safeguard for Turkey; and they will protect her from any aggression on the part of Russia or Austria on her rights and territory; and it is to me evident that Russia’s long course of policy with regard to the Ottoman empire in Turkey, will be frustrated from a quarter whence she may least expect it.

“That which, in my opinion, establishes the resources and vitality of the Turkish empire is, that if one of the serious struggles to which it has been exposed for the last forty years, were to have happened to any other power, it would either have crippled it or caused its entire destruction. Turkey, on the contrary, has, during this space of time, experienced the severest trials, as, for instance, the Greek revolution, the de-

struction of the janissaries (who at the time constituted her army), the annihilation of her fleet at Navarino, the protracted war with Russia, the civil war with Egypt, and the many partial outbreaks caused by the machinations of European powers ; in spite of all these, far from sinking, Turkey at this time possesses, besides irregular troops and auxiliaries, a regular and well-disciplined army and a splendid fleet, and is endeavouring still further to increase, and re-establish peace, and internal security ; and also to find the best means of enriching her treasury without burdening her subjects ; and I trust, that under the government of the present benign Sultan, and his enlightened ministers (in spite of the fanatical party), Turkey will, I am convinced, yet make great progress in civilisation and all its concomitant blessings. At least, if she does not, it will not be for want of exertion on the part of Abdul Medjid to introduce into his empire a thorough reform, himself setting an example to his subjects of forbearance and goodly feeling towards the many sects dwelling within the boundaries of his empire.

Just before leaving Constantinople, a circumstance occurred which created quite a sensation amongst all classes and creeds. An Armenian girl, the daughter of very respectable parents, formed a secret attachment to a young Moslem, in the service of the Sultan. The lovers managed to contrive interviews without exciting the suspicions of the girl's friends ; and eventually the girl fled to her lover, embraced the Mahommedan faith, and was regularly married to him. Sometime after they had been married, the young girl went to call upon her mother, most probably without her husband's consent. The mother and all her relations bemoaning with many

tears her apostasy, implored of the girl not to return to her husband, but to be received once again into her mother church. The girl, overcome by emotion for the moment, yielded a ready consent; and for her better security, it was agreed that she should be placed within the Armenian asylum. This was accordingly done, and the husband made vain search for his missing bride. Meanwhile the young lady got tired of her confinement, and very possibly of the treatment she received from the over-zealous attendants at the asylum, and accordingly contrived, through the window of the room where she was confined, to convey a message to her husband. The husband immediately complained to the authorities; who without delay demanded the girl of the bishop. The prelate at first denied any knowledge of the person in question. A military force was then sent to bring her away at any cost; and a parley commenced between the commandant and the bishop, in which the latter gave his *parole d'honneur*, that if the troops were withdrawn he would conduct the girl himself next day before the divan, and she should there declare publicly, which of the two faiths she of her own free will would wish to embrace. Meanwhile the ambassadors of all European powers had exerted themselves on the girl's behalf, but all to no purpose. Next day the girl was brought up trembling before the divan, to answer the important question about to be put her. Most of the European authorities were present, and so was the girl's husband; and no sooner did her eye meet his again, than all her resolution failed her; and so powerful was the effect of her love, that she relinquished parents, family, friends, creed, and nation, all for his sake; and when asked the question, to which creed she gave the

preference, her reply was—“ *I am a Moslem, the wife of a Moslem, and I will live and die as such.*” This settled the affair at once. The Turk took the girl back to his house again, and the poor bishop sorrowfully withdrew, lamenting as he went along the unfavourable result of the affair.



## CHAPTER XII.

## EGYPT.

RESUMING my narrative, my readers will be interested by a slight sketch of Egypt under Abbas Pacha. There is little doubt but that Egypt has made great strides in civilisation under the sway of the present enlightened viceroy ; for we have daily evidence of her still improving. Abbas Pacha is only now about forty-five years of age ; he is the son of the eldest son of Mahomet Ali Pacha, and, therefore, according to the Egyptian rule, which gives precedence to the eldest male heir, entitled to the throne after the decease of Ibrahim Pacha ; but whose children, in some countries, would have been considered as lawful successors. Abbas Pacha, unlike his predecessor, whose habits greatly contributed to curtail his life, is a man of very moderate and temperate mode of life ; he has only one wife, and by this lady has an only son, now about twelve years of age. At the recommendation of the honorable Mr. Murray, the British consul-general in Egypt, the viceroy sent to England to engage a tutor for the education of this son in English, and Mr. Artin, an English lawyer, was the lucky individual fixed upon.

No sooner had Mr. Artin arrived in Egypt, than Abbas Pacha promoted him to the dignity of Bey, and he now ranks amongst the nobles of the land. The

Pacha having first set the example himself, strongly recommended all his ministers to have their children educated in like manner; and I have little doubt but that this sage advice will, in the course of time, be adopted. He also sends annually a number of young men to England to be educated, who naturally take back with them a strong predilection for the people with whom they have for some time resided. This will tend greatly to introduce a love of English civilisation and improvements in the country.

Amongst other improvements, Abbas Pacha has built himself a magnificent palace, Darr il Bedah, midway between Cairo and Suez. This good work excited the satire and spleen of the French people, who insisted that it was an act of insanity, throwing away money upon such a palace, situated in the desert; but, apart from its having given occupation and bread to thousands of starving inhabitants, the very fact of the Pacha making this place his favourite summer resort, has drawn the attention of the natives to the capabilities of the soil in the neighbourhood, and the place, from being a barren wilderness, is being rapidly brought into cultivation; villages are springing up, and, in addition to all this, the roads have been put into excellent order—not a trifling boon conferred upon the vast number of English travellers that are continually crossing this desert.

The steamers on the Nile, and the railway now in course of construction, are still greater proofs of the Pacha's enlightened and civilised mind. Abdallah Bey, an Englishman who some time since embraced Mahomedanism, was appointed director of the transit, and the Pacha promoted him to that grade because he thought no one else competent to discharge the duties

of the post. The truth of the matter is, that the English never commanded greater influence than they do at this present day in Egypt; they are looked up to and considered as everybody and everything, and for this they have much to thank their able consul-general, the honourable Mr. Murray. To give an example of how far his influence with the Pacha may extend, I may mention that, some short time since, two hundred Copts were compelled to enlist as soldiers. Now these Copts are Christians, and their sufferings amongst the Moslem Fellahs can be more readily conceived than described; their friends and families succeeded in interesting Mr. Murray on their behalf, who interceded with the Pacha; and the result was, that they were immediately discharged from the army. But to shew how much and how sincerely Abbas Pacha appreciates the worth of such a man as the British consul-general, the best proof I can give is, that when a sad calamity befell Mr. Murray, and his amiable lady died, the viceroy ordered all his ministers and head officials to go into mourning for her, and to follow her remains to the grave. Such a funeral was never witnessed in modern Egypt. All the nobles of the land, and the first gentry, without the distinction of creed, with black crape round their left-arms and round their red caps, following in mournful procession this highly-respected English lady to her grave. If a potentate had died, greater honours could not have been rendered; and this act is without precedent in the East.

During my stay in Egypt I resided with my kind friend Mr. Raphael Abet. Mr. Abet is one of three brothers; they were from Syria, and eventually settled in Egypt. These three brothers were all eminent for their piety and their charity. One unfortunately died

prematurely ; but he has left behind him an undying name, having bequeathed an immense fortune for the support of charity schools and other similar philanthropic institutions. The brother, of whose kind hospitalities I so abundantly partook during my sojourn in Egypt (and whom I cannot refrain from thanking through the medium of these pages), is equally well-known for his benevolence and good deeds. On the occasion of the revolution in Greece in 1823, when the Turks took several females and children prisoners, and carried them away to be sold as captives in other countries, several of these unfortunates found a friend and deliverer in Mr. Abet. Not a few of the captives were carried into Egypt, and there sold. Many of these were, at a great outlay, purchased by him, who treated them in every respect as though they had been his own children ; he fed, clothed, and educated them, and eventually they married and settled comfortably in life. One of the Messrs. Abet is now established in London as a mercantile man, and I am sure all who know him will bear me out in pronouncing him to be a good man and a devout Christian.

Whilst on the subject of Egyptian friends and acquaintances, I must not neglect to mention the name of that good man Mr. Larking, who has left behind him in Egypt many a souvenir of which any Englishman might well be proud ; his name is gratefully remembered by all classes in Egypt, from the viceroy himself down to the meanest peasant. Mr. Larking, on first establishing himself in Egypt, so ingratiated himself with the Pacha, that in a very short time he was permitted to purchase whole villages, over which he ruled with as absolute sway as any Egyptian landowner. The country round these villages he soon

brought into the richest state of cultivation, and so lenient a master, one under whom they reaped so many hitherto unheard-of benefits, made the peasants almost adore the name of Mr. Larking. Not only did he ameliorate the condition of his own land by the introduction of a superior method of cultivation, but he conferred a boon upon the whole of Egypt by procuring, at some expense and trouble, the Sea-Island cotton seed, which has succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectations, and for the sample of it which was shewn at the Great Exhibition, Mr. Larking obtained the prize. The viceroy was, of course, much gratified and pleased at this, and he has bestowed many costly gifts on Mr. Larking as expressive of his approbation, besides which, that gentleman has been appointed to act as the viceroy's confidential agent in England. This is only one of the many instances in which commoners have been raised to a high rank by Mehemet Ali Pacha, who being of obscure origin, took delight in raising to power those whose personal merits and talents brought them before his notice. Amongst the Viceroy's favourites was one who particularly deserves our notice, viz., the late Boghas Bey. An Armenian by birth, and of no great opulence or particular parentage, Boghas Bey was possessed of all those good qualities which cannot fail to endear one even to the most savage breast: his charities were proverbial even to the detriment of his own personal interest. Step by step he rose in the viceroy's favour, till he had so far ingratiated himself with the Pacha, that Boghas was created a bey, and had other high distinctions conferred upon him. He might have accumulated immense wealth, for the viceroy's heart and hand were ever open to confer great benefits upon him,



but Boghas Bey preferred to serve his master gratuitously; and even the produce of the gifts of land forced upon his acceptance, went towards the maintenance of the poor, and many widows and orphans bless his name even to this day. But to show how dangerous it is to be a favourite at Oriental courts, and how it subjects one to the vile jealousies of courtiers, even Boghas, favourite as he was, was well nigh falling a victim to the viceroy's susceptibility and the villany of others. Some miscreants had misrepresented his character and actions to the Pacha, who, in a paroxysm of rage, ordered an officer in attendance to go instantly to the supposed delinquent's house, and have him drowned in the Nile. As good fortune would have it, Boghas had on some previous occasion saved this very officer's head, and the man gratefully remembering this, hid Boghas in his own house, intending to facilitate his escape to some other country. This was a bold stroke, and one worthy of great praise. Next morning the viceroy was sadly out of spirits; his wrath had not only calmed down, but circumstances had actually transpired which cleared his favourite of all suspicion. Great then was the viceroy's consternation and grief on being informed that his orders had been executed to the letter: he tore his beard and gave way to exclamations of such sincere sorrow, that the officer took courage to prostrate himself at the viceroy's feet, and explain how matters really stood. It is needless to say that he was readily pardoned, and Boghas received into higher favour than ever. At last, however, a sterner executioner than the one sent by the Pacha knocked at Boghas Bey's door. Death came armed, and the good man died, to the universal sorrow of the Pacha and all Cairo. Such had been his munificence during his lifetime, that at

his death he was almost a bankrupt. The viceroy, determined to carry his esteem to the last, ordered him a public funeral, at which all the Egyptian officials and European consuls and merchants were invited to attend. So that Boghas was buried with honours such as are rarely paid to a prince in that country.

Of course during my stay in Egypt, I had often opportunities of visiting all the known antiquities, and amongst others the celebrated Pyramids, those noble testimonies of the bygone splendour of the land, and whose age and founders seem destined ever to remain a mystery. A friend of mine, a great antiquarian, and one deeply read in profane and sacred history, used to delight in holding forth to me his speculations as to their origin. His opinion was, that it must be erroneous to imagine that these pyramids were the handiwork of the Israelites. In support of this argument he quoted from many authorities, and amongst others from a well-known traveller who saw at one place the people making bricks with straw cut into small pieces, mingled with the clay to bind it. Hence it is, that when villages built of this brick fall into decay, the roads are full of small particles of straws, extremely offensive to the eyes in a high wind. These persons were engaged, exactly as the Israelites used to be, making bricks with straw, and for a similar purpose, viz., to build extensive granaries for the Pacha—"treasure cities for Pharaoh." Hence my friend argued, that the Israelites laboured in making bricks, not in hewing stones such as the Pyramids are constructed with; but I do not pretend to enter into any argument upon so learned and obscure a subject: I certainly was surprised at the magnificence of their structure, and often wondered within myself where the stones came from, by what means they were

transported, and by what now unknown force or lever such huge blocks were raised up one above another, and so left a firm memento through centuries, despite convulsions of the earth, to stand forth as objects of surprise and admiration to the visitors of the present generation.

With regard to the climate of Egypt, I believe it to be as good as many parts of Syria, though the heat is certainly more intense, and even I myself suffered from languor and oppression; but then the mornings and evenings fully recompense you for the sultrier heat of the day, and I never recollect to have enjoyed a summer's moonlight night more than I did upon the Nile. The European residents in general enjoy excellent health; and few that have resided there long would wish to change their method of living, or the country they live in.

In Cairo, the Consular Square contains many very handsome buildings, inhabited principally by the consuls of various nations, and some of the more wealthy European merchants. With my friend Mr. Walne, the British Consul at Cairo, I have spent many a pleasant hour, and for his great kindness and hospitality, I am glad to have an opportunity of thus publicly thanking him. Mr. W. is the head of the Egyptian Society, who have a very fine library, consisting chiefly of works relating to the antiquities and country of Egypt. The valuable books contained in this library are at all times, with perfect goodwill, placed at the disposal of strangers; and I gratefully acknowledge to have derived useful information and amusement from the well-stocked shelves of this institution.

A great source of comfort to English families residing in Egypt, is the punctual regularity with which the

European mails arrive and depart ; for, besides meeting almost weekly with swarms of their countrymen and fair countrywomen flocking to and from India, they have constantly fresh news from home, and can, upon any great emergency, transport themselves from the warm clime of Egypt to the their own much-loved foggy island within the fortnight. Besides this, they are continually receiving newspapers from all parts of the world, possessing the advantage over England of being cognisant of Indian and Australian news a fortnight before such intelligence could reach London ; and this for merchants connected by trade with both places, must naturally be of paramount importance.

During winter, the Europeans at Cairo are much given to festivities ; dinner-parties and balls and soirées are then the order of the day, and great good feeling exists amongst the residents. Even private theatricals have been attempted ; but it is during the Carnival that Cairo resounds with merriment, and masques and grotesque-looking figures, with torches and music, parade the streets from house to house till long after midnight, few enjoying the fun better than the native Cairines themselves. The gentlemen have shooting parties and coursing matches ; the ladies ride out in the environs ; they have healthy exercise, good houses, and the best of fare—all the productions of the East blended with the luxuries imported from European markets ; and in this respect, as well as in conversing with and meeting more frequently ladies and gentlemen of their own nation, the English at Cairo possess advantages over the English in Syria. All the former have to complain of is the sultry heat of the weather, whilst the latter are isolated, and bemoan their solitude and the great lack of intelligent society.



Egypt, now called by the natives "Messir," was called in the Hebrew Scriptures, "The land of Mizraim"—a strange similarity in the two names, which places it beyond a doubt that, however much the face of the country may have been changed since the days of Moses and the children of Israel, and though consecutively under the sway of governments and people whose languages and dialects varied in the extreme, the same original name has been faithfully preserved, though corrupted and abbreviated by the various pronunciations given to it by various people. A land of troubles and misery it has been through many long centuries, from the fearful days when Aaron's rod manifested the supreme power of the God of Abraham before the eyes of an unbelieving and stiffnecked people, down to within the last few years. The frightful devastations committed by the plague, and the extermination of the Mameluke power; these have been the last manifest outpourings of the wrath of God. Let us hope that the full cup of indignation has been poured out and emptied to the dregs; and that the prophetic words of Isaiah have been fulfilled as far as regards the curse, and that the predicted blessing is about to fall upon the land. "The Lord shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it; and they shall return to the Lord, and he shall heal them," etc. (Isaiah xix. 22—25).

The striking allusion made to the fertility of the soil of Egypt in Gen. xli. 47—"The earth brought forth by handfuls"—is still exemplified by the produce. Corn is so plentiful, that cargoes are annually shipped for the maintenance of other lands, and when the famine was sorely felt in the neighbouring countries, whole fleets of vessels, laden with corn from Alexandria, brought to England timely succour to starving multitudes, and



enriched the coffers of not a few speculative merchants, who made the miseries of their fellow-beings a means of advancing their own welfare in the world.

On leaving Egypt, I came back to England *vid* Marseilles. I had barely arrived at this latter port before I again had the misfortune of coming into contact with the gendarmes. On a former occasion, as the reader may recollect, I got into a scrape by inadvertently emptying a basin of water out of the hotel window over the head and shoulders of a fiery French officer. This time I had brought with me a little parcel of tobacco to distribute amongst a few of my friends. They wanted to make out a case of smuggling against me, but no sooner did I produce my passport to shew that I was attached to the Turkish embassy, than these officious officials changed their conduct, and quite overpowered me with their civilities. Truly Marseilles is an unlucky place for me. I here also had a sample of the bad management of travelling in France. I took a first-class ticket direct from Marseilles to Paris by diligence. On my arrival at Lyons, I was told that I must remain until next morning, unless I consented to travel in an inferior part of the carriage. This, notwithstanding my urgent remonstrances, I was compelled to do, owing to the necessity of my being in Paris by a certain date, and, though exposed to many inconveniences, I was so fortunate as to arrive there in time. My stay at Paris was limited to a few days, and I then came on to London and delivered my despatches to his excellency our respected ambassador, who immediately recognised me as one of his suite, and who has ever since continued to treat me with the greatest urbanity. So soon as my official duties permitted, I went the round of my kind friends in London, and amongst

others, was delighted to see the Honourable George Massey, my old and well-tried friend, who insisted upon my taking up my abode at his house, where I remain surrounded by every comfort and luxury that kindness and forethought can provide, and happy in the enjoyment of the society of a genuine English family.

The handsome present of horses lately sent by Abbas Pacha of Egypt to the Queen of England, clearly testifies the good feeling existing between the two governments, and how much the viceroy wishes to keep up those friendly feelings so successfully cultivated and maintained. One of the horses above alluded to is of the largest and most valuable and rare breed, and there is little doubt but that the English nation will hereafter be indebted to Abbas Pacha for the possession of a breed of horses now unknown in England. The horses were sent to this country under the charge of Nubar Bey, an Armenian gentleman, a native of Smyrna, a relative of Boghas Bey, and is much esteemed by the Pacha and the Egyptians; he received a first-rate education in Europe, and speaks several of its languages with fluency; he accompanied Ibrahim Pacha on his visit to this country a few years back as interpreter-secretary, and since that time has visited several European courts on various diplomatic missions, and now holds a high appointment under the Egyptian government.

The grooms who accompanied these horses were much astonished on seeing the queen; they could not believe that so mild and gentle a lady could be possessed of such power and influence over the whole world; they were confident she must have a most clever magician in her employ, through whose arts she had attained so elevated a rank, and won such a share of

their viceroy's admiration. When they called to see me at Cambridge-square, amongst other articles of furniture, etc., which attracted their attention and admiration, was a little mantle-piece ornament, representing the three graces, of exquisite workmanship; they immediately set these down as household gods of the English, and it was with difficulty I could convince them to the contrary, and assure them that these, in common with many other nicnacs, were simply used as ornaments to the room. These poor fellows were very grateful for the kindness shewn them by Mr. Massey and his family, who procured for them tickets of admission to many of the most interesting sights in London; and after partaking of his hospitality, they returned in a few days to Egypt, begging me to assure my friend and his family that, if ever he chanced to travel in Egypt, they hoped to have it in their power to shew him the antiquities of that country; and, though they could not boast of so magnificent a seraijah, or such furniture, or such sumptuous fare, still a good pillaf, a chibuk of tobacco, and a finjan of coffee, should be always at his disposal. Mr. Massey was much pleased at the simple good nature of these people. Before taking leave, I asked them their opinion of England and its people. They replied, both were wonderful; but they still preferred their own native country. That the English thought but of the present, and lived for this world alone; but that they looked forward to a hereafter, in which they hoped to be amply recompensed by all the sensual enjoyments a Mahomedan paradise promises for the numerous mortifications now endured in the flesh.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## LIFE, MANNERS, AND CUSTOMS OF SYRIA.

*(From the Cradle to the Tomb).*

AN addition to the family of a Syrian man is always an event looked forward to with the greatest anxiety, more especially in cases of a first child. The mother secretly prays and hopes that it may be a son; so does the father, but he seldom alludes to the subject. When the propitious event takes place, no hakim, except of late in extreme cases, since the introduction of European medical men, is ever called in. Such a thing would be considered highly indecorous and improper. Dyâhs (midwives) are plentiful in Syria, and these females are ready at a moment's notice. If the result be a son, then the whole household is overjoyed, and the husband is besieged by friends and acquaintances, all anxious to outvie with each other in wishing him joy, and in hoping that the newly-born son may live to prove his comfort and support in old age. If, however, a daughter be born to the family, it is looked upon rather in the light of a misfortune than otherwise. The husband looks as if he were quite ashamed of himself, the subject is seldom or ever broached, and if any of his intimate friends allude to the matter, they do it with the view of consoling the father. The usual form of expression in such cases is, "She that has brought a daughter will bear a son," "Inshallah ! if it be the will of God." Soon after birth

the child is wrapped in swaddling clothes, and is at once nourished by its own mother. Wet nurses are almost unknown, and are only employed in cases of death or great debility. The care of attending upon the mother devolves upon the female relatives; but the women in my country are usually so strong and robust that little attention is required. No muffling of knockers—no strewing of straw in the streets—no doctor anxiously expected—no dosing of both parent and child. Amongst the peasants and lower classes in particular, the women are so hardy that it is by no means an uncommon event for a mother, four or five hours after her accouchment, to be seen propped up with cushions, busily engaged in mending or making baby-linen. On the fourth day after her confinement, the *Kanum* or lady is expected to receive the visits of her acquaintances and friends, both male and female; and for this occasion a bran new coverlet usually handsomely worked in silk, has been prepared. Propped up by pillows and covered with *farooa*, she receives lying-in state visits. Her visitors do not remain long, but during the whole of the time they are complimenting her on the fortunate event; and the new-born is paraded round, and gazed at, and admired; but no one dares to praise him without commencing with “Mas-halla!” “God be praised for it!” This custom of visiting the mother proves clearly that the usages which existed in the time of our blessed Saviour, when the wise men from the East came to look upon the new-born babe, and brought with them offerings, continues up to the present day, each friend or acquaintance bringing or sending his or her offerings.

The first thing to be done after the birth of the child is to fix upon a name. This name, if it be the first-born son, is usually the name of the child's paternal



grandfather, or else, if the birth takes place on the anniversary of any great Saint's day, it is called after him; as for instance, Paul, or John, or Peter, and that saint becomes his patron through life; this necessary preliminary being arranged, the child is baptised within a week of its birth for fear it should sicken or die. The priests usually come to the house, sometimes the child is taken to the church. The godfathers and godmothers, two of each, and all the relatives assemble, a large basin of water (made tepid in cold weather), is placed upon a table and duly consecrated by the priests; the mother undresses the infant, and hands it naked as it was born to the hands of the officiating priest, and this minister, repeating prayers over it, in which he is assisted by others, immerses the whole body of the infant into the water three successive times in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Consecrated oil is then used, and the mark of the cross made with it on the forehead and chest of the infant. This also is done three times, the sponsors standing by and answering for the child. It is then wiped dry and carefully swaddled up again, and in a few minutes the ceremony terminates with the priest's blessing.

The rest of the day is usually devoted to pleasure, and the parents now feel more at their ease, as the child has been admitted within the pale of the Church, and in case of any untoward event, would be entitled to Christian burial. The father, if this be a first son, drops the name by which he was formerly known; thus, supposing the name to have been Yusuf or Michali, and his friends used to call him the Kowajar Michali (the father of Joseph), now that his son has been christened by the name of Yacob, for instance, they call him Aboo Yacob, or the father of Yacob—a proud title for a Syrian; for not to have children is

looked upon as the greatest misfortune and disgrace that can happen to a married couple; whereas, however poor the family, a multitude of children (especially if they be males) is considered a blessing. From the day of the Psalmist David down to the present day, it may truly be said in Syria, Blessed are they that have their quiver full of them. "Lo' children and the fruit of the womb are an heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord. Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant: even so are the young children. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate" (Psalm cxxvii. 4, 5, 6).

The greatest pride of an old man in Syria is to sit at the doorway of his house, or at the city gate, of an evening, pipe in hand, surrounded by his sons and grandsons. Although the infant is tenderly cared for, still, it must, however healthy, have occasionally some slight ailment, and then great consternation prevails in the household. The devices to heal it are curious. In every family a remnant of the holy palm-leaves, distributed on Palm Sunday, are very carefully preserved to serve on like occasions; these are now mixed with olive-leaves and aloes, and the whole is then thrown into a small brazier of charcoal, and the smoke thereof constitutes an incense supposed to expel the evil eye.\* Sometimes, strange to say, the ashes of this composition bear strict resemblance to a human eye. After this, if the child is not better, the family priest is in this interval sent to, and offers up prayers for its welfare. Oil of almonds is usually applied externally, and rubbed in warm, generally with very beneficial results. There is also a peculiar kind of soft, fine earth in Syria,

\* The Hebrews appear to have had a similar tradition, as we read in the *History of Tobit*, vii. 4, 6, 7, 16, 17. viii. 2, 3.

which is much sought after by mothers; this, when collected, is brought and warmed near the fire; it is then placed in the cradle, and, being covered with a fine counterpane, the child, wrapped in its swaddling clothes, is laid on this, the warm earth retaining dryness and heat for many hours. Many of the poorer people lay their infants on the earth itself, and then cover them over warmly. In all cases it appears to have a beneficial effect on children, who seldom or ever catch cold. If you wish to incur the displeasure and dislike of a young mother in Syria, there are two certain methods of gaining this end; the first is to step across any baby-linen that may be lying about the ground; the second is to rock the cradle when the child is not in it; both these are considered very unfavourable to the child, and some mothers carry these ridiculous superstitions to such a pitch, that they dislike any notice being taken of their children, even though the praise be accompanied with the indispensable "mashallahs"; but if there is one thing more than another that young mothers have a superstitious horror of, it is the visits or enquiries of a barren woman; she, it is supposed, must entertain a jealousy of those more fortunate than herself, and her praises be insincere and terrible.

To such an extent do these ridiculous superstitions prevail, that if, by any misfortune, a child should happen to die, even though it be a year after any remarks may have been made by a childless woman, these remarks have been treasured up, and the evil is laid at her door. Children are usually weaned in their fourteenth or fifteenth month, and then they are for a short time nourished principally on cow's or goat's milk; but by the time a child is eighteen months old, it has learned to eat of all manner of dishes, and they

are so pampered and indulged in this respect, that from the minute they awake till they fall asleep again, their stomachs have hardly any respite. Fruit, bread, cheese, meat ; anything and everything is set before them from the very false notion that, the more they eat, the faster and the stronger they will grow.

This notion prevails throughout, and it is imagined that strength cannot be gained except by hearty eating. So that when a man is very ill, and a doctor is sent for, his friends are all clamorous and anxious to tell him how many hours has elapsed since he last partook of food, and to beg of him to insist on the patient's eating something forthwith, or to give him some medicine that will make him eat. It is quite beyond their comprehension to understand that in some instances food would be very deleterious in its effects. A man or a child has only to say, "*Ena-juaan*," or "I am hungry," and it would be considered a heinous sin not to gratify this craving instantly. All this, however, is pardonable when the real motives, those of sincere love and pity for the sufferer, are considered, mistaken though they may be ; but time and education can alone remedy this evil. So soon as the boy is able, unaided, to run about and talk, he is taken in hand by his parent ; his dress is always of the best obtainable materials, and if his parent be a merchant or a shop-keeper, he accompanies him to his office, and there, seated cross-legged, begins to ape the actions and conversation of his father. He is early instructed in lessons of sedateness and self-respect, and if not cheerfully willing to obey and listen, a few taps of the rod soon bring him to his senses. Slight castigations are generally inflicted by the father in the absence of the mother, for otherwise they would be of no effect.

Some mothers are very attached to their first-born so that they would willingly sacrifice their own lives rather than that their darling should suffer ever so slight an affront. Whipping a child in a mother's presence would invariably lead to high words and ill feeling, and the result would be, that the child, whipped by one parent and petted by the other, would naturally imagine itself very ill used—hate the father and love the mother. The good effects of the punishment would be lost, and the child only grow more wary and naughty. To avoid these family broils, the father early accustoms his son to accompany him to his place of business; there, unseen by the mother's eye, the child soon learns implicit obedience to his father's will, and as this obedience is at first always rewarded by some small present of fruit or so forth, the child grows in love as well as in obedience. It is surprising what sage little fellows, of only five years old, one meets perched up cross-legged in the shops of their fathers; they are so well versed in the every-day business of the profession, that the father can repose every confidence in them, and leave them for hours together to deal with customers, weigh out, bargain, and effect sales. A child naturally takes a pride in thus early finding itself useful and important, and there are few children in the world that are more precocious than those of my native country. A child brought up in this way would think it highly indecorous to romp and play about during business hours. In the evening, however, he is permitted to repair to the fields with his companions; the onus of business has been laid aside, and the perfect child shews itself once more in the merry game or joyous laugh of the sportive crew.

By the time a child is six years old, he seldom, if



ever, requires chastisement; indeed, he thinks to be scolded is a perfect disgrace, and is consequently ever on the guard not to incur his father's displeasure. The father, who now thinks it time that his son should be instructed to read and write, works upon the feelings of the boy so as to excite in him a great desire for learning. He usually commences by telling him that he is quite ashamed of having such an ignorant son, whereas his neighbour's children are all well instructed; then citing over a few instances, where the children are invariably older than his own, the child protests that he only lacks opportunity, and the next day his schooling commences.

The etiquette of Syrian manners is early instilled into the mind of the Syrian boy; he is taught, on first rising in the morning, after prayers and the necessary ablutions, to wish the "*Saboh il Kahir*" ("good morning," or, more literally, like the Irish expression, "the top of the morning") to every individual of the household, commencing with the father and finishing with the lowest menial in the establishment. After this, the son sees that his father is supplied with the necessary coffee, a slice of toast, and his *narghili*, and then next to his father he ranks himself, excepting when strangers are present. On the arrival of a guest, he is taught to go forth and welcome him as far as the threshold of the entrance-door, and this he does meekly, taking and kissing the hand of the visitor if a man of advanced age, at the same time overwhelming him with such flattering compliments as, for instance, "My thoughts have always been concentrated on you, O light of my eyes!" The boy then follows the guest to the *mistaba*, where his father is ready to receive him, and having busied himself ordering necessary refreshments, he

returns to the divan, and seating himself at some distance from the others, listens in respectful silence to their conversation, or pulling out the brass inkhorn from his side (Ezekiel ix.), which contains likewise his stock of pens (and is an inseparable companion, being always thrust into the girdle and carried about with him from morning till night), he possesses himself of some stray piece of paper, may be the back of a letter, and improves the moments as they fly by furthering his knowledge in arithmetic.

When a priest calls at the house, then the son is all attention; none but himself is permitted to serve him; he replenishes the pipe-bowls, fetches the fire, hands him the coffee and other refreshments, and each time retires from the presence of the rev. father with fresh blessings heaped upon his head. The son is early taught to listen, but never to speak unless first spoken to, to be deferential to all old people, kind to the poor, and especially to the blind, sympathising with servants, whose faults he must correct with mildness and leniency, and above all, to abhor and hold in utter detestation all strong drinks and drunkards. You may travel from one end of Syria to the other, and mingle with every grade of every creed, and I may safely state, that drunkards are rarely met with. None but those who have travelled in Europe, or have mixed with European society, are addicted to this vice.

The son is taught to adhere strictly to all laws of cleanliness. There are few people that are more rigid in the observance of them than the Syrian. On first rising, and on going to bed, before and after every meal, before and after every little promenade, hands and face are washed with soap and water and a few leaves of the lemon-tree; the mouth is also rinsed out,

sometimes with simple water, sometimes with rose or orange-flower water, according to the opulence or poverty of the man. Tooth-brushes are unknown among the Syrians. On entering a house, he is taught to leave his shoes before intruding into the visitors' hall, and with light yellow slippers on, treads over the carpet, kissing the hands of all the elders who may chance to be seated in the room. On entering a church in some parts of the country, he leaves his shoes outside. This practice dates from the period of Moses and the burning bush, when the Lord addressed Moses, saying, "Draw not nigh hither : put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is Holy ground" (Exod. iii. 6). Likewise he also lifts the turban off his head for a while, and then replaces it. During the reading of the Gospel and Belief all the males remain uncovered.

So soon as a boy's education is completed, and this simply consists in his being able to read and write Arabic, with a slight knowledge of arithmetic, then the father anxiously looks out for some opening which may enable his son thus early to acquire a knowledge of the world, and of the necessity of fighting one's own battles, so as to be independent of the support of others ; but though the son may earn a sufficiency to maintain himself without drawing on his father's revenue, he still remains an inmate of the parental roof ; indeed, in many instances he never quits it, and it is not uncommon to see the son a man of mature years himself, with his own children fast growing up to manhood, paying the most implicit obedience and respect to his father's commands and wishes, just with the same deference that a child of six years old would obey an austere father ; indeed such is the universal

reverence with which parents are treated, that (though these instances are rare) fathers have been known to chastise their sons when they had attained the mature age of thirty-five or forty; and the son, though father of a family himself, and though smarting from shame and indignation at such an exposure before the eyes of his own wife and children, has meekly borne the chastisement and kissed the hand that corrected him. "Honour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land," is a commandment acted up to the letter in Syria, and any son transgressing this law, would meet with small sympathy from his countrymen, would be shunned by all, and be an object of indignation and scorn to all Orientals of whatever creed. Even that ferocious tyrant, Djessar Pacha, who never hesitated to sacrifice human life, whose wives and concubines were all massacred by his own hands to satiate his furious jealousy and rage against one unhappy girl, who had been discovered carrying on a flirtation with an officer of his court; even he, villain though he was, respected this law and enforced others to respect it. A story is told of a young Christian, who, being newly married, took possession of the whole of his father's house, leaving the poor old man, who was a widower and a cripple, barely sufficient rags to cover his nakedness, or food to satisfy his hunger. The Pacha, hearing of this atrocious conduct, sent for the miscreant, and when he was brought trembling into his presence, exclaimed, "Hast thou no fear of God? In an hour's time let me hear that your father, dog that you are, is in the possession of every comfort and luxury; or, by my beard, your head shall answer for this crime."

When the son is about twelve years of age, his parents begin to look about them to choose out from amongst



the neighbours a suitable wife for their first-born. This is an arduous undertaking, and the son is often consulted as to whether he has any particular choice amongst his playmates and companions. Sometimes he has, sometimes he leaves all to the good judgment of his mother, always, however, stipulating, that the girl must be young, pretty, and good-tempered. At length the choice falls upon some one or other, and the preliminaries are arranged, the dower to be paid for her settled, handkerchiefs bought, rings ordered, and a choice party of intimate friends invited, who, accompanied by the priest, repair to the house of the intended bride's father. The girl is brought into the room closely veiled, the young lad being present also—vows, and rings, and presents, are exchanged—the priest pronounces his blessing—the pair are betrothed, and from that day till the wedding takes place, become utter strangers to each other. They may have been bosom companions only the day before, romping with each other from early childhood, but the moment that the betrothal has taken place, there is an inseparable barrier to their meeting or conversing again till the church shall have pronounced them man and wife. Betrothals generally last six months, but sometimes mere children are betrothed, and then they have to wait till both have arrived at years of maturity before they can be married. It seldom if ever happens, excepting of course in cases of death, that these betrothals are put aside or broken, the church considering the vows then pledged as binding on either side as the marriage vow itself.

I may here be permitted to say, that I trust many of my fair readers will, after perusing this, feel convinced of the binding and solemn nature of the marriage tie



amongst Christians in Syria. I have been continually asked by ladies the number of wives I left in Syria (I may here publicly state that I am not a married man, though I fervently hope some bright day to crown my earthly bliss with an English wife)—they seemed quite incredulous on my informing them, that only one is permitted by our religion—that we are not Mahomedans—that religion alone admitting of four lawful wives, besides concubines; but I can confidently assert, that the greater part of even these have but one wife. Possibly, in default of issue, another may be taken—this, however, is the *exception*, not the *rule*; and though polygamy has existed to a greater or less extent in the East since the days of the Psalmist David, and his son, the wise King Solomon, still where it is mostly practised now-a-days is amongst the wild Arab tribes, south of Gaza and the Nosairigh. Of these latter I have known an instance of a man marrying two wives on the same day, both young maidens, from different villages. But amongst the Turks the practice is anything but prevalent; in proof of which I may quote as instances, the late Grand Vizier Ali Pacha, the former one, Reschid Pacha, and Cabuli Effendi, the present talented Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and most of the leading Turkish gentlemen who have resided in Christian countries, all these have but one wife.

Although it is most true, that in Europe polygamy is disallowed, I need not say how often the marriage-vow is broken, and how many are the delinquents. Often old men even have mistresses in addition to their own lawful wife. Much of this corruption evidently arises from the iniquitous practice of *mariage de convéniance*, so often speculated in by most match-making mothers, in the two greatest capitals of Europe. Men

and women, who have not a single idea in common, and no sympathy with each other, are inveigled into marriages because the one has wealth and the other titles, or what is worse, beauty is bartered for gold. I am quite at a loss to account for the utter want of feeling in those parents who can ruthlessly sacrifice the happiness and peace of mind of their own child, by marrying a girl, perhaps of sixteen, to a half-idiotic or toothless man, in infirmity or age, thus ill calculating either for the happiness or protection of inexperienced youth. (*I know of such instances*). It is not in nature that such a couple should be happy; for a young man cannot be fascinated by the charms of a haggish old woman, neither is it possible, where such disparities exist, for a young girl to nourish one spark of that warm affection which should ever exist between man and wife.

Now, in Syria, such marriages never occur. A man takes a wife for a *helpmate*, not for a puppet—for a companion in health—a consolation in sickness, to help him in enjoying the bounteous gifts of nature, or to soothe when the cloud of affliction rests over his pathway. This was why marriage was constituted, and this is why people get married in the East. It is true that an Oriental wife cannot paint, or play the piano or harp, but she can sing in her own quiet way, and that sweetly, too—never sweeter than when she is hushing her first-born to slumber; and she can dance on any very festive occasion, not the giddy flaunting waltz or polka, but a quiet measured tread, graceful and becoming without being indecorous. It may be that a man does sometimes marry a girl possessed of a wealthy dower; but these instances are rare, and when they do occur, the dower is, for the most part, invested in jewels or in lands. If in the latter, the husband enjoys

a life-interest in them—he is indeed lord and master of the property, and can make any improvements he sees fit: the former generally decorate the wife's turban on festive occasions; but in case of misfortune, then these are pledged or sold off one by one to meet the emergency. Far be it from me by these observations to throw any slur upon the married life of the people of Western Europe; I merely wish to show to those who imagine that polygamy is universal in the East, that the same thing, but in a different form, is as prevalent in their own country. The English, indeed, are, upon the whole, freer from this vice than most other civilised nations, and their domestic felicity far exceeds that of any other people.

But to return to the immediate subject. The son, as soon as he is married, is fairly embarked in life, and if his father be a widower, then the whole of the household arrangements devolve upon the young wife. The son is generally master of the house, and the old man retires from business and the bustle of life, passing the rest of his days as a guest or sort of pensioner in his own house, and seldom meddling with its domestic economy. Should the mother, however, still survive, she devotes her time to instructing her daughter-in-law in domestic matters, and also accompanies her when she goes out.

There is one thing very praiseworthy amongst the Syrians, and a trait in our character which many civilized nations would do well to take for an example. I allude to untiring love and charity between not only members of one household, but all relations or connexions, however distantly connected. One seldom or ever hears of a father and his children being on bad terms, or of quarrels and broils between sisters

and brothers. Of course they are not exempt from angry passions; high words may rise between them, and even ill feeling rancour in their hearts, but they never allow "the sun to set on their wrath;" and if only for appearance sake, they make it up again speedily, and converse and chat as freely as ever. In this respect they act up to a wise, if not elegant, French proverb — "*Le linge sale doit être lavé en famille.*" No strangers are permitted to rejoice at their discords, or mock at their infirmities.

Then again, so long as one member of a family is well off, he will never suffer his poor relations to feel want. If he can find them employment, well and good; if not, they have the shelter of his own house, and food from his own table; and in return, all he expects is, that they will lend a hand at being useful. Every want is supplied them; and if even clothes be necessary, these are provided. When two or more relations of a poor man are well to do, they join together to assist him, and this in a great measure accounts for the scarcity of street-beggars in most parts of Syria. A Syrian would consider it a disgrace to his name, that any member of his family should be suffered to want whilst he had a crumb to spare, and it would be looked upon as a heinous sin in a religious point of view. In England, perhaps, it would not be fashionable to have a poor relation out at elbows tarnishing the splendidly furnished drawing-room of a wealthy relative; or it would not be convenient to curtail the luxury and voluptuous display of every-day wealth, to contribute a pittance for the maintenance of a starving nephew or a crippled cousin. This may not be fashionable, but it would be Christian-like; and rest assured, O slave of the world, so full of all "the pomps and vanities of this wicked

world," that when He comes, who gave even his life for your salvation, then the poor uneducated Syrian—the man who has received little—will have a far lighter account to balance with the Great Author of eternal life, than you who have possessed and have withheld.

Public prostitution was a thing entirely unknown in Syria until intercourse with Europeans introduced it first into the sea-ports; from thence it gradually spread inland. Formerly the most severe punishments were inflicted for this crime, and where the authorities failed to interfere, the relatives took the law into their own hands, and very summarily disposed of an offender against their honour. Even now-a-days, such poor creatures are rare, and if by chance one meets with one, she is invariably under the protection of some European—of itself a sufficient guarantee from punishment. I remember a most shocking instance of the punishment inflicted upon a woman of this class some eighteen years ago at Beyrout. Her family were neighbours of mine. She was several times warned to be on her guard, but totally disregarded these warnings, till at length, some of the men connected with her family entered (with the father's knowledge and consent) the house of her paramour at night, and after hewing her to pieces, threw her remains into a well attached to a house belonging to my uncle, the Rev. Kouri Georgius Risk Allah.

The girls in Syria are principally educated in housewifery, such as baking, washing, cooking, etc. Starching and ironing are as yet unknown, save to a few aspiring geniuses at Beyrout, who, from this knowledge, derive no small emolument. The girls are also instructed in the management of all household affairs, the care of poultry, and even of making cream cheese



and *leban*, and also in household superstitions. Amongst these last, they are taught—

Never to rock a cradle when it is empty, because evil spirits are very fond, so say old crones in Syria, of being rocked.

Never to sweep the house after sunset, as this is only practised when there has been a death in the family and after the body has been carried out.

Never to look into a mirror after sunset, for a *afreet* is sure to be peeping over their shoulder, and he may shew himself to them in such a very unpleasant manner as might frighten them to death instanter. Only think of this, ye opera-going and ball-frequenting young ladies! What a hard case it would be if you were forbidden to look into a mirror after candles have been rung for.

Never to cut their finger or toe nails near a basin of water; for if the nail should chance to fall into the water, they have nothing left to them but to make their will and go to bed, for, according to the logic of all old women, die they must.

And last and not least—Never to interrupt or harm the black snake of the house—*Hye il sauda*. In almost every house in Syria there is a peculiar black serpent, large but very harmless, which takes up its abode in the cellar of the house, and will never afterwards quit its nook or corner till killed, or till the house falls, or the snake dies. No Syrian would ever intentionally kill these snakes, for, besides keeping mice and rats away, they are held in such deep veneration that endless are the absurd superstitions and tales told about them, all of which I myself once firmly believed in. Amongst other things, it is said, that if you destroy one of these snakes, the mate will be sure to seek for and obtain

vengeance. They pretend, further, that these snakes are doatingly fond of milk, and that the smell of it will immediately attract them. It is commonly believed, that a young mother may be sure, if she is not on the watch, that the black snake will come in the night and feed off her breasts, till it has drained them so dry that there is nothing left for the infant; and again, with regard to the child, should the snake be disappointed in getting its supply of milk from the fountain-head, that it will then resort to the artifice of inserting its tail into the infant's mouth, and so tickling its throat as to cause it to be sick, and thus supply itself with food. But the most ludicrous story told is about the conscientiousness of one of these snakes, a story which is firmly believed by most Orientals. It runs thus: "In Syria, it is the custom of every family to lay up a year's provisions of all the necessaries of life, in store-rooms attached to the house; these provisions consist of melted butter in jars for cooking rice, wheat, burghal, etc. Now, as the story goes, one of these black snakes once deposited her eggs in one of these store-rooms, a hole in the corner of which led to the serpent's nest. The young ones had been hatched, and were all assembled together gambolling about, when some of the children, happening to surprise these young snakes at their frolics, seeing that they were very small, whipped them up in their handkerchiefs, and ran off with them to the other end of the house. Now mark what might have been the serious results of this frolic. Mother snake coming home could not find her young ones, and made a pretty to do about it. At last she discovered that the children had stolen them, and in her rage and vexation determined to be revenged on the whole family. Accordingly, with the assistance of her tail,

she removed the cover of the butter-jar, and inserting her fangs into the butter, succeeded in poisoning the whole mass. By and bye, home came the lady of the house from the bath, and no sooner did she see what the children had been about, than, with many screams and exclamations, she insisted on the young snakes being carried back again. No sooner said than done; and now mother snake began deeply to regret what she had done. How to remedy the evil was the question—speak she could not, nor had she any other method of warning the family not to use the butter. Well, now what do you think she did? She called the male snake to her assistance, and these two, coiling themselves round the thin jar, squeezed with all their might and main, till the jar broke into a hundred pieces, the melted butter ran out on the ground, and was lost, and the family were saved from being poisoned.”

This is one amongst the many fabulous tales about the black household snake of Syria; but such like superstitions need not startle educated people in England, when they remember the endless fables that pass current in their own land about many animals, plants, and things—even to coffins darting out of fires, winding-sheets in candles, and lover-like apparitions in tea-cups.

It must not be supposed that the higher classes of Syrians are not scrupulous with regard to the laws of etiquette; on the contrary, they strictly enforce them. If Kowagar Bustros and his family called to see Kowagar Saba and his family on this Tuesday, Kowagar Saba will return the visit next Tuesday. If Kowagar Domian invite Kowagar Michali and family to dinner, Kowagar Michali and family give a return party to Kowagar Domian. But the grand day

for receiving visits in every house is the *Eed*, or festival of the master of the house, which is annually celebrated on that saint's day whose name he has taken, and whose patronage he acknowledges. Thus all those of the name of Michali remain at home on St. Michael's day, and all their acquaintances call to see them, and to wish them health, luck, and prosperity; some bring fruits, some sweetmeats, and few come empty-handed. If this usage is productive of no very beneficial effects, it at least serves to promote a kindly feeling betwixt neighbours and friends; and this, after all, is a grand point to observe if one wishes to be comfortable and happy in this world.

When a Syrian dies, wax-tapers are sent round to his friends as a notice that they are invited to the funeral. When they are assembled in the church, the tapers are lit, the corpse is placed in the centre, and the service is read; then the candles are extinguished, the body is buried, and "his place knows him no more" (Job vii. 9—10).

## CHAPTER XIV.

## SYRIA AND HER INHABITANTS.

IN this chapter I shall endeavour to take a brief review of the country and people—the drawback to the advancement and welfare of the latter—and the inducements held out by the former for colonisation by emigrants—with the mutual benefits accruing therefrom.

That portion of the Turkish dominions which lies to the southward of Tyre, and includes all the country comprised within the boundary limits of Gaza and Hebron to the south, and Tyre to the north, is, with very few exceptions, an uncultivated waste, owing, not to the want of fertility of soil, but to the indolence of its inhabitants. The sea-ports, or roadsteads, are at all seasons of the year open and exposed, and in the winter months dangerous in the extreme for shipping; in proof of this, I have only to cite the many shipwrecks which have occurred within the last few years at Jaffa and Caipha. Gaza has only, during the present year, risen into notice, two English schooners having arrived at Belfast direct from that port, deeply laden with grain. But the roadstead of Gaza is perilous for vessels at all seasons of the year, as the wind blows in shore; the holding ground is bad; the inducements held out to



commerce very small; the inhabitants lazy and impoverished; little or no consumption for seaport goods and British manufactures (the natives of the villages in the interior restricting themselves to clothing which is made of coarse stuffs manufactured by themselves or imported from Egypt); the desert no field for speculations; and such little European produce as finds its way into the interior being carried thither by petty retail merchants, natives, who supply themselves with an annual stock from the oft-times glutted market of Beyrout. With respect to the export trade, the south of Palestine supplies abundance of wheat, sessame, and other grain; but the quality of much of this grain is superior to that produced in Asia Minor.

The people inhabiting these southern parts of Palestine are almost a distinct race from their brethren farther north; in manners and customs, and even in complexion and stature, differing materially from the northern Syrian: the great heat of the climate and the general scarcity of water rendering them an indolent and careless people, sadly lacking in cleanliness, and without spirit or energy to make any exertions for the amelioration of their wretched condition. After leaving Tyre, and as we proceed south, mulberry-plantations quickly disappear; thus the one grand staple commodity is wanting, and the occupation of rearing the silk-worm, at once a healthy and amusing pastime and a lucrative labour, is denied the inhabitants of Southern Palestine. With hard manual labour, privation, and exposure to intense heat, and all the evils of comparative serfdom, they have no pleasurable recreations to lighten the arduous pursuits of their every-day avocations: the plough and the spade—the spade and the plough—incessant toil and small recompense—

unwillingness to work, yet goaded to it by dire necessity, the pangs of starvation, or the chastisements inflicted by unrelenting landlords and landowners. Such is their unhappy lot.

Their huts are miserable, their children squalid and unhealthy; they toil through a life of troubles and sorrows, and have the poor satisfaction of knowing that they are possessed of no benefits which might, in after-years, accrue to their children's advantage. From generation to generation they live and die, are born and given in marriage, but the tenure of their serfdom is still the same. They are nominally free subjects of an enlightened government, but virtually the slaves of circumstances, groaning under the petty chiefs and subordinate understrappers of government, who have yet to learn submission to the will and mandates of the present excellent Sultan, Abdel Medjid Khan, whose reign has already been distinguished by many great improvements in the condition of the Ryah population. Many of the firmans issued of late years have not as yet come into force in the interior of Turkey and in those possessions of the Ottoman empire situated farthest from the capital. In the course of some years it is, however, to be hoped, that the most remote villages will be benefited by the improvements made in Western Europe.

The disposition of the natives of Southern Palestine has a tinge of sullen moroseness in it, which has doubtless been ingrafted in them from generation to generation; there is nothing *couleur-de-rose* in their sphere of life and action; and the superstition they inherit from their ancestors is not that pure and lovely religion of Christ which can cast a halo around, whilst it strengthens, encourages, and supports in the darkest

hours of affliction and woe. It may be, that, under better auspices—could the people be brought to have a common interest in their own and each other's welfare, were there less animosity and party feeling existing between the various creeds, could they be brought to nurture less of deadly malice and hatred towards each other, all combining in one common cause with a mutual good understanding—that the fate of Southern Palestine and its prevailing feature of sterile barrenness might be changed. The country, people, and climate, might yield to the introduction of agriculture and other improvements, and be materially bettered—if land were meted out in portions with a sure guarantee to the cultivator that his toil and labour would eventually be recompensed by his reaping some fruits for himself from the sweat of his brow to benefit his children—were the lower classes of the Moslems less avaricious, the Jews less despised, the Christians less exposed to the grinding system of the land-owners and admitted to reap fair profits from the fields they plough and the gardens they cultivate for their wealthier and most powerful master; then, peradventure, the seacoast and the cities near and round about Jerusalem would gradually re-assume a right to that blessed title which ascribed to its countries the appellation of a land rich indeed, and flowing with milk and honey. But alas for the land of Canaan! the portion of the tribe of Judah is become an unsightly wilderness; and of Zion it may be truly said, "Thy house is left unto thee desolate."

From Gaza to Tyre the whole line of sea-coast is inhabited by people who, with the exception of Jaffa, Caiffa, and Acre, are professionally goatherds and farmers—a simple people that subsist chiefly upon milk and cheese, with fruit and vegetables, and who are merely

the hirelings of the owners of the large flocks committed to their charge. These goats furnish the surrounding country with the only palatable meat to be procured in these hot regions. Mutton is scarce, and beef seldom heard of; hence poultry and goats are the staple commodity of the meat-market. A young kid of a year's growth is up to this very day often chosen as a choice delicacy. Who does not call to mind the crafty art of Rebecca is seasoning the well-flavoured dish so as to make it vie with the tenderest venison? A kid, seasoned with spice and stuffed with sweet herbs, rice, and the kernel of the fine fruit (at the very recollection of which I hunger), is the festive dish of every house in Palestine on seasons of mirth and great rejoicings. The father of the newly-married bridegroom, tottering from extreme old age, will issue forth from the festive board after having partaken of this delicacy, with a face radiant with smiles and contentment, pouring forth blessings on him that prepared the savoury meat.

It is seldom now-a-days that men die of extreme old age and debility in the countries round about Jerusalem; but where such instances occur, and where the faculties are retained to the last, and the human functions are in full operation, then rest assured, that the tent scene in Isaac's last closing moments — so beautifully portrayed in the Holy Scriptures — is still vividly re-acted up to this very day, with the sole exception perhaps of the deceit practised by Jacob and his mother, which omission may solely arise from the fact that the children of this world have now become wiser in their generation, and are no longer to be imposed upon by such simple and rude artifices.

But in their poverty and misery, the children of Southern Syria must bow the neck meekly to the yoke

till a brighter day dawns from above upon their affliction, and till the curse is removed and the blessing of the Almighty shall descend, like the rich dew of Hermon, upon their country and themselves, and more than amply recompense them for centuries of suffering and woe. They must remember the words spoken by the Prophet Isaiah—"O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation."

With Sidon the whole face of the country changes, and here commences that luxuriant and verdant pasturage and foliage, which continue increasing as we progress to the northward, and may be said to reach a climax of beauty and profuse richness in the districts of Lebanon, Tripoli, Lattachia, and Antioch. Vast mulberry plantations, orchards of delicious fruits, and vineyards covered with an endless variety of grapes, everywhere delight the eye. At those spots where the soil is untilled, and up the lofty sides of the mountains, grow the majestic oak, the stately fir, and the lofty pine; every inch of ground being thickly covered with wild flowers, blackberry bushes, and the trailing honeysuckle. In the neighbourhood of Sidon, even the rare exotic banana has now been reared with success, its large and handsome leaves and clustering golden fruit being a source of wonder and admiration to the Syrian who is a stranger to that neighbourhood. Here also commences that plentiful supply of clear, crystal water which so materially adds to the beauty of the scenery, makes cleanliness and comfort a cheap luxury to the inhabitants, and as a natural consequence, proportionably benefits the health of the natives. Children grow up surrounded by the choicest gifts of a bountiful Providence, and their young and tender hearts are moulded in a meeker and more gentle frame; their labour is



more congenial to their constitution and habits, and the smallest exertion is quickly recompensed by a grateful and fruitful return. The shade of many trees affords them a welcome shelter; the waters of many cool streams are at hand to quench their slightest thirst; and the choice fruits of a hundred orchards, maturing to ripeness, afford them a luxurious repast. Besides these, the cattle and poultry are more plentiful, and of a better sort, and the pasturages are thickly dotted with flocks of fine healthy sheep, and milch cows in abundance. The result of all these blessings is, that the inhabitants are a healthier, wealthier, and a more cheerful race than the people of Southern Palestine; and the vast supply of honey gathered from the wild honey-combs in the neighbouring mountains, and the excessive cheapness and excellence of milk renders this portion of Syria the land "flowing with milk and honey" of the present day.

Oh that I were possessed of sufficient eloquence to prove to that great mass of people who are emigrating from the British isles to the far distant shores of Australia and North America, the fallacy of the opinion, so universally entertained by some English, with regard to the risk and danger incurred by those possessed of lands within the limits of the Turkish dominions! Would that I could divest them of the idea usually run away with by Englishmen, that they would be exposing their lives and property to the will and pleasure of ferocious three-tailed pachas, such as they have read of in books of travels, dated nearly half a century back, and whose detestable names and memory are now handed down to posterity in tales and Eastern ballads.

The real state of the Turkish empire is quite the

reverse to what these good people imagine, and of late years any European, particularly since the siege of Acre, and an Englishman especially, commands universal respect from all the inhabitants of Syria, rich or poor, Christian or Jew. There may be, perhaps, a few of the more bigotted beys and Mahomedan nobles, who, wishing to remain in undisturbed possession of their wealth, and the monopoly of land and labour, would regard the advent of enlightened strangers as an infringement on their position, dignity, and independence; but their rage and jealousy would prove as impotent as it would be contemptible.

It is moreover difficult to satisfy Europeans, especially Englishmen, that they can make safe investments in the Turkish dominions; but it is only requisite to enquire into the tenure of all sorts of property as held by Europeans in all parts of Turkey for the last two centuries and upwards; their vested rights have never been questioned, and when any injury or loss was proved to have been sustained to any such property, the official representative of the owner had only to submit his claim, and in every instance full and satisfactory redress was instantly afforded. I may mention, in proof of this, the instance of the French Factory on Mount Lebanon, which occurred some years ago, where some losses were sustained, owing to some irregularities and outrages of the petty local authorities, and other villagers, at the time of the insurrection in the Lebanon, between the Maronites and the Druses. Europeans hold property after this manner, viz., they authorize a *rayah* subject of the Sultan, in whom they can place implicit confidence, to buy or purchase such and such a house or landed property in his own name; then the *rayah* makes a transfer of the titles to such property to the

European in lieu of some imaginary debt, usually a sum far exceeding the value of the property itself. This transfer is made in the Cadi's, or Chief Judge's Court; and being registered, becomes valid in Turkish law, and is legally recognised as such. It is thus that the oldest vested European interests in Turkey are secured and possessed, retained and handed down to the lawful heirs of the European proprietors.

Of one thing I am certain, and that is, that the middling and poorer classes would hail the arrival of English emigrants with rapturous delight; and in stating this, I am not without antecedents to prove what I assert. I might instance the case of the late lamented and excellent Mr. John Barker, who, for many years, lived amongst the wildest and most bigoted portion of the natives of Northern Syria (at least, they were so when he first went amongst them); go now and ask whomsoever you will—the richest or the poorest—their opinion of the English, and, as if with one voice, they will reply—that, taking Mr. Barker as a standard, they consider them the best, most charitable, and most enlightened people that inhabit the earth—the best friends and staunchest supporters of the Sultan—and a people that they would gladly see settled around them.

Let us quietly argue both sides of the question; and perhaps as an objection to start with, the reader may urge, that, in the instance above quoted, the gentleman who thus settled in Syria was a wealthy retired Consul General, possessing, *for that country*, an income equal to, if not exceeding, that of the most important Pacha in Syria, and that, therefore, apart from his wealth, the high official position he had sustained in Egypt and Aleppo, was a sufficient motive to command esteem

and respect amongst the natives ; also in the cases of Col. Churchill, who possesses large estates in the mountains and of many other Europeans, and the unfortunate Lady Hester Stanhope. This may be correct to a certain extent, but is false in the main. All that now remains of Lady Hester Stanhope, who once ruled with almost absolute power, the wild Arabs of the desert, are the few crumbling ruins of her humble abode at Djouni ; her very name is almost forgotten, and her sun of life sunk behind the cloud of obscurity. But why was this ? Simply because she lavished her money, when she had any, in vain paraphernalia, and giving large sums, as *backshish*, to unprincipled men, who had no sooner spent the money, than they forgot the patron. Had she employed her time and means in buying land and cultivating it, introducing useful arts, etc., then her memento would have been lasting, and the boon conferred handed down from generation to generation. Mr. Barker's and Col. Churchill's estates flourish, and will continue to flourish through many years to come.

The better sorts of peaches and grapes, besides a variety of rare Indian and American fruits, which have been introduced by English philanthropists, all serve to remind the Syrians of the kind friends who introduced them ; and many who have risen from obscurity into comparative independence, hourly bless the good men whose hands showered these benefits upon them. It would be in the power, more or less, of every Englishman emigrating to Syria, to confer a lasting benefit upon the natives through the introduction of a better method than they possess of cultivating the ground, etc. ; while a blacksmith, a skilful carpenter, and a good mason, would prove invaluable acquisitions ; and an industrious

farmer might initiate them into the art of making wholesome cheese, in lieu of the hard unpalatable stuff that now bears that name. These would be the greatest of boons to the Syrians; and though naturally a slow people, unwilling to deviate from old customs and habits which have been handed down to them from generation to generation, still the successful working of any newly introduced system, affording them incontrovertible proofs of its yielding a better profit, would very soon induce the natives to follow the example of their more civilised neighbours.

The advantages to be derived from emigrating to Syria are manifold; but first amongst these let me class, what to a patriotic Englishman must be a pleasant thought, the comparative vicinity of this country to his native land. Thousands of people are content to be cooped up for months in a close confined vessel, exposed to all the hardships and sufferings of a long sea-voyage, and subjected to the expenses of passage-money and outfit, with the almost certainty before them, even if they succeed beyond their most sanguine wishes, of being exiled from their country for ten or a dozen years. I do not now allude to those shoals that are flocking over to Australia, tempted from home by the immense wealth of the Gold-diggings; nor to the possibility of these Gold-diggings being very speedily inundated with people who may, when too late, bitterly lament the rashness of their proceedings; neither will I advert to the possibility of mines being discovered even in so neglected a country as Syria. Some are already known; and even copper and iron also exist. In Arabia, mountains of turquoise exist, specimens of which were exhibited at the Exhibition, and gained a prize, by Major C. R. Macdonald, who had also the



honour of presenting the Queen with a pair of magnificent bracelets. I am arguing with that class of men who emigrate simply because they can find no occupation for their professional labour at home. Yet not one out of these thousands has moral courage to emigrate to Syria, where, if they proceed by a steamer, their outfit and passage-money would amount to about one-half the expense incurred in going to Australia,—the passage barely exceeding a fortnight, and that passage, if the season is well chosen, performed in the height of summer, with hardly a squall to ruffle the placid waters of the Mediterranean. Here, then, at the very outset, is a saving of at least one-half of the expense which must be incurred in going to Australia.

We will now suppose our emigrant arrived in Syria, with the surplus cash in his pocket; he here converts each golden sovereign into more than one hundred piastres, and he must be a spendthrift indeed if he cannot live well and comfortably for ten piastres per day, or at the rate of four sovereigns a month. In this interval he has had enough time to look about him, and determine upon the town or position in which he intends fixing his abode; and he has had also, during this short period, the satisfaction of writing to his friends at home, and of receiving their answers and congratulations on his safe arrival. Listen to this, O ye that would still persist in emigrating to Australia, and remember how many months must elapse ere the happy tidings of your safe arrival and its reply can reach you.

If the emigrant be a farmer he is not long in fixing upon a fit site for the establishment of his farm-house. The immediate neighbourhood of Tripoli, Beyrout, Tyre, Sidon, and Jaffa being best adapted for his pur-

pose, the shipping there and the towns themselves affording an ample market for the consumption of live stock. He will have cheapness to contend against in the sale of cattle and poultry, but the superior quality of what would be produced by a careful farmer, his stall-fed oxen and sheep, and well-fattened poultry, would, amongst Europeans and the wealthiest natives, command eventually a ready and profitable sale. Cyprus would supply him with young turkeys at an average value of about a shilling a head, and with every other species of poultry. If he wished to experimentalise in improving the breed of cattle, he might do so advantageously, not to mention the profit from wool and hides. The one article of cheese alone, in exchange, would be to him a source of certain gain. One half of the inhabitants subsist for a great portion of the year almost entirely upon this food, wretchedly as it is made by my countrymen.

Should the emigrant be a lover of a cold climate, he can easily fix his abode on the snow-capped pinnacles of Lebanon, where he may enjoy perpetual frost. If another should prefer a milder climate, he can calculate his temperature almost to a nicety, and by carrying a pocket thermometer about with him, go higher or descend lower, as fancy or inclination might prompt. Should he love to luxuriate in heat, he has only to descend to the sea-side, and there he will revel in all the glory of sunshine, glare, and warm land-breezes. Mechanics, etc., would find ready occupation in the very heart of the busiest towns in Syria, and what is more, such is the high repute of English mechanics and artizans amongst the natives of Syria, that even old grey-bearded Mahomedans would gladly apprentice themselves, giving in return their manual labour.

It may be urged, with regard to climate, that the

heat of all parts of Syria is too intense to admit of English labourers being employed in the cultivation of the immense tracts of waste land that so abound in various districts. My reply to this is, that both food and labour being extremely cheap in that country, and the produce, whether grain or silk, disposable at an enormous profit in the English markets, the proceeds of such sales would enable the small capitalist to employ sufficient labourers under him, so that, in short, he would be simply a teacher and overseer, managing his own property, and could, in a very few years, afford to have an official in his pay, whilst he himself perhaps might be, with his family, enjoying a cheap jaunt to his own country.

But there is also another large class of emigrants, to whose means and occupations Syria is even better suited than to all the foregoing. I mean persons of a certain fixed moderate income; those in receipt of an annual rent or interest, varying in amount from £50 to £300. A man in London, especially if he have a wife and family to support, is comparatively a pauper if he can earn no more than £50 per annum. Take that man to Syria; plant him in any part of Lebanon, or in any other district of that country, and he has no longer pounds and shillings to mete out carefully so as to cover the annual outlay for household expenses; but he has now to deal with piastres and paras. For one piastre he can get four ordinary penny loaves; for half a piastre he can get five eggs; for another half, as much fresh butter and milk as will serve his purpose for the day, and unless he be an extraordinary eater, leave an abundant surplus. Thus for two piastres we have seen him provided with milk, butter, and bread—three staple commodities—and the additional luxury of

fresh-laid eggs. An *oak*, or 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. of mutton, would cost him about two and a half piastres, and he spends a piastre in vegetables and fruit; thus the raw articles of consumption cost him daily five and a half piastres, or just one shilling sterling. With sixpence additional, he can have fish and wine and coffee, an ample supply of each, enough indeed to satisfy the cravings of three moderate men; so that his annual item for food, wine, and coffee, would amount to 547 shillings and sixpence, or £27 17s. 6d. Of his original income of £50 per annum, he would thus still have a surplus of £22 2s. 6d. His rent and the hire of three servants, their keep included, may consume £10 of this balance, and with the remaining £12 2s. 6d. he could buy and keep for the whole first year a very serviceable stud, whose cost would be more than recompensed by the benefit and pleasure of horse-exercise every day in the week.

Having now mounted my comparatively English "beggar on horseback"—even if he be the most indolent of indolent men—he must go on thriving better and better. Most Englishmen, however, have too much good sense now-a-days to suffer precious hours to flit lazily by. It is evident also, that our emigrant will be put to less expense the second year of his sojourn, at least to the amount of the value or cost of his horse, which will then only become an item of keep, as grass is plentiful and barley (on which our horses are fed) cheap. His exchequer would thus be increased by £10 at the end of the second year. Now, even in England, a sharp-witted fellow might, by unremitting perseverance and indefatigable zeal, turn ten pounds into twenty; but in Syria, this sum is 1100 piastres, and for 1100 piastres there is many a bit of ground to be purchased equal in size to the largest



square in London. This he could lay out, if he fancied, part in a kitchen garden, part in a farm-yard, and part in a nursery for young mulberry shoots, to be transplanted the ensuing year, by which time also the extent of ground could be doubled by the purchase of a fresh lot for £10 more—both planted with mulberries, the proprietor supplying his own table with poultry and vegetables, making his own wine, and pressing his own oil. In five years after his first settlement, he would have a mulberry plantation five times as extensive as Eaton Square, with that portion of the property first planted already yielding a return; for the mulberry-tree, after three years, is ready to rear the worm upon, and the quantity reared goes on increasing as the trees become larger and yield a more abundant supply of leaves. At the end of these five years our landed proprietor, whose greatest horror in London was quarter-day, and rent and taxes, now finds himself in receipt of about £80 per annum instead of £50, with every prospect of a rapid augmentation, for he may have been adding ground to ground each successive year, and every successive piece of land purchased may have been larger than the preceding, till about the seventh year of his residence, when he may have made an outlay of about £200, and have a promising plantation, yielding him, conjointly with his income, somewhere about £120 per annum, with every prospect of this income rapidly increasing. The best part of the pleasant tableau, too, would consist in the fact that there had been no pinching and screwing up of one's means, no direful privations to meet the emergency, no sleepless nights, and worrying busy days, racking one's brains and detracting from health and happiness; but on the contrary, the emigrant's life will have been one



perpetual scene of pleasurable and healthful occupation and diversion.

He will be an early riser, because he has had his little flower-garden to weed, or the planting out of his fruit-trees and vegetables to superintend: his farm-yard will then claim his attention; the cows milking and sending forth to grass; the sheep, the turkeys, the geese, ducks, fowls, guinea-hens, etc., all to be attended to; terminating by a pleasant ride round his own plantation (how his heart throbs at the thought, *his own plantation!*), and in seeing that his people are at their various labours for the day. This ride gives him a keen relish for his breakfast; and the forenoon is agreeably occupied in making notes of when such and such a hen first sat on her eggs, and when such a batch of chickens were hatched, etc. At noon he has lunch, and takes his *siesta*; whilst the afternoon is devoted to study, or to correspondence, or, if the fancy take him, and the season be propitious, to a shooting party. There is no game-law to check his ambition, or to limit his range of ground: no preserves, no man-traps, no "All dogs found trespassing will be shot." He may climb up one hill and go down another; spring a covey of partridges, knock over a couple or more, and then quietly re-load his gun for another shot. The only things that seem inquisitive about, or will take any interest in, such proceedings are, not *game-keepers*, but *game-destroyers*—jackalls and sparrowhawks; the one will track the blood of the wounded partridge more surely even than the dogs, the other soars high over head, and equally robs the sportsman of his game unless numbered amongst his victims.

In the cool of evening, the emigrant will enjoy his wholesome, abundant, and luxurious dinner, and

perhaps, entering into the spirit of Oriental life, take a *fingan* of coffee, and, may be, smoke a pipe of delicious *Latachia*; and at ten, at the latest, he takes himself to bed, glad, after the many occupations of the day, to seek that healthful and refreshing sleep, which is sure to be the natural result of so regular a course of life.

Such is the picture of life I have drawn out for a man possessed at the outset of only £50 per annum. Many in the receipt of even more than this sum annually, are now on the threshold of the poor-house. Surely, if such should peruse these pages, they cannot longer hesitate as to what to do or how to proceed.

Married men who wish to luxuriate in the enjoyments of life, but whose limited means of from £200 to £300 per annum restrict them, should emigrate to Lebanon and to Syria. There they might build themselves palaces, have parks stocked with gazelles and deer, the choicest orchards of fruit, a stable not to be surpassed by potentates of Europe, summer-houses, and dogs, and guns, and other requisites for shooting and coursing parties; a summer residence near the sea-side, and a yacht to pleasure in whithersoever they might choose, or whither the whim of the moment might lead them.

Nothing but an imaginary obstacle prevents the the realisation of all that I depict, and the alarm entertained by Englishmen residing in countries under the Turkish sway, with regard to the insecurity of their property and the absence of all redress, is wholly imaginary. In proof of this, I shall merely quote one instance, that of Mr. Goodall, an American missionary,

who was plundered by the soldiers during the Greek piratical invasion of Beyrout, to which I have before alluded. As soon as quiet was re-established, the Consul applied to the Pacha for a restitution of the stolen property, or a tantamount value. A list was made out, and so punctillious was the Pacha, that even a fowl, that had been ready trussed for roasting, was included amongst the missing articles, and every farthing was paid down out of the Government treasury. And this is the case in most instances where a European is the aggrieved party; the Pacha of the district will be sure to see justice done him and the Treasury is entitled to collect the sum disbursed from the heads of the villages in the immediate neighbourhood where the theft was committed. This answers a double end; it satisfies the injured party, and ensures almost to a certainty the capture of the felon, for all the villagers are on the watch to discover the rogue that has brought on them such a taxation.

Finally, if Englishmen would only emigrate to Syria, and establish a small colony there, then the uninitiated natives would be enabled to form some estimate of their character as a nation; and, above all, would discover, that they, like themselves, are Church-goers, strictly observant of the sabbath, possessing ordained bishops, priests, and deacons,—acknowledging the efficacy of the Sacraments, and a people really good, and believers in the Gospel, in lieu of being what they now suppose them to be, a people that mount upon house-tops to pray, because the higher the elevation the nearer they think themselves to God.

If consumptive patients, in the early stage of that most direful malady, were to resort to the milder

climate of Syria, there is every hope that, under God's blessing, they would eventually recover, for, apart from the excellency of the climate, they are there exposed to no sudden changes of heat and cold, no coming out of stifling opera-houses into the chilling night air, no pernicious excitements, nor exhausting late hours.

## CHAPTER XV.

SYRIA, HER INHABITANTS, AND THEIR RELIGIONS  
CONTINUED.

THE desire to benefit my countrymen by an influx of European emigrants has tempted me to wander from the subject of the preceding chapter; to forget the actual inhabitants for a moment, while painting the delights of a residence in Syria to those who can only become so in future. I must now proceed with my survey of the different races of people who inhabit the country, and I shall endeavour to make this sketch of their peculiarly national and religious characteristics as clear as possible.

There are few countries on the face of the earth, so small in extent, which comprise so many different races and religious persuasions, as Syria. In point of fact, its present condition in this respect presents us with a remarkable illustration of the numerous schisms, which took place in the Greek Church during the earlier period of its existence, and which, it is well-known, were carried on with greater perseverance and bitterness than any similar disturbances, which have at various times afflicted other churches.

So complete has been the separation of the sectarian bodies from the present church—so great was the influence of the leading ecclesiastics among them, that a religious difference has produced a difference of



habits and manners, and has even given to people, descendants from the same stock, and living in the same country, the appearance of a totally different origin.

We also number among our inhabitants a large and influential population, inhabiting a mountainous district, who believe, and their belief is not without foundation, that they are of Chinese origin. In reviewing our population, we find that it may be classed into four chief sections: Christians, Jews, Mahommedans, and Infidels. The Christians we find sub-divided into more than that number of sects; almost every sect constituting a different people.

The Mahommedans are also sub-divided into two branches, the orthodox and the un-orthodox. The Jews stand alone and isolated, as they do all over the world, though there is one of the infidel tribes which is now declared to be of Jewish origin. Of each and all I shall speak in the proper place, believing that I shall best succeed in rousing the interests of my readers by presenting this picture of the inhabitants of Syria from a religious point of view.

Of late years, as most of my gentle readers must be aware, the attention of the benevolent Christian public of Great Britain has been frequently and anxiously directed to the want of proper religious teaching in Syria. Englishmen, both poor and wealthy, have contributed from their purses to supply the deficiency through the aid of English and native missionaries; the latter having been educated in England expressly for this sacred purpose.

The United States have not been behindhand in this general cause; American missionaries have co-operated with their brethren from this country zealously, and with good results. How far those results have

extended ; how rapidly the elementary principles of the purest Christianity have been spread abroad in the East, through the agency of these godly men, to whose fervent zeal and untiring energy, I can, at least, bear the most satisfactory, though humble testimony, has been better and more efficiently told in the annual reports, which the several missionary societies issue to the public, than any description which I could give.

Though brought up in, and taught to revere, the faith of the Greek Church, or of "the Orthodox Eastern Church," as that religion is denominated in my own country, I am truly grateful for the deep interest which these societies and their supporters have taken in the religious welfare of my nation ; but it would not be becoming in me to attempt to add anything to their reports.

It will be sufficient for me to assure my fair readers, that the pious gentlemen employed by the parent societies, have traversed Syria in all directions, piercing even into the very heart of its most mountainous districts, sowing broad-cast the seeds of a pure and immaculate faith ; that they have found patient listeners in all, and zealous converts in many of our towns and villages. The number of their converts continues to increase ; they have planted the true faith, "The Cedar of Lebanon," in defiance of the machinations and intrigues of the "wild beast of Rome;" they have rooted up numerous plants of the "Thistle," which had flourished in the land from time immemorial, and they have prepared the ground, nay, they have already laid the foundation on which to raise an imperishable temple in honor of the only true Mediator, our Saviour, Christ.

They have my most fervent wishes for their complete

success, and, trusting to the aid of the Most High, I confidently look forward to that day, when the off-shoots of the stately Cedar of Lebanon shall have covered the entire land, casting a holy shade over its inhabitants, when the Thistle shall have disappeared before the more useful tree, and when the "wild beast" shall have been banished to his own den.

I desire, above all things, to remove an erroneous impression which I find prevailing very generally in this country as to the character of the Greek, or Orthodox Eastern Church, to which, by far the greater portion of the Christian inhabitants belong. I have myself styled this Church the "Thistle of Lebanon," when comparing it with the healthier and purer doctrines of the Reformed Church, which I have ventured to call the Cedar of my beloved Lebanon; but, nevertheless, it would be most ungenerous, nay unfair, to permit my readers to retain the impression that the Greek, or the Orthodox Eastern Church, is an off-shoot of the Church of Rome, or in any way connected with it.

Nearly three hundred thousand of my countrymen worship God according to its doctrines, and all of them, excepting, perhaps, the most ignorant, would feel indignant at the supposition that they were followers of the "wild beast."

I will not fatigue my readers with a learned disquisition on the forms of worship, or on points of doctrine, for I shall effect my purpose much easier by a simple statement of the cardinal differences between the two churches, and I have no doubt they will at once be convinced, that there is a greater degree of relationship between the English, or any other Reformed Church, and the Orthodox Eastern Church, than there exists between it and the Church of Rome.

Learned historians, and some of the most intelligent and inquiring of Eastern travellers, have dwelt with much force on the early history of the Orthodox Eastern Church, and there is no doubt in my own mind, that they have clearly established the fact of its being, not merely, not an off-shoot from the Church of Rome, nor in any way intimately connected with it; but, on the contrary, that since its establishment it has always been a Protestant Church, and that it is therefore more ancient in its Protestant character than either of the Reformed Churches.

Unfortunately, for the character of the Orthodox Eastern Church, the knowledge and experience of these intelligent men has been confined to a very small circle of readers, and the greater part of the British public has attached infinitely more credit to the imperfect and superficial sketches of travellers, who resorting to our country for a season, and after "doing" Syria in a month, beguile the tedium of their journey home by writing an account of their seeings and doings, concocting it in as rapid and careless a manner as their examination into the condition of the country was hasty and thoughtless.

It is upon the authority of such trustworthy writers, that I find the impression prevailing, that the creed, the doctrines, and forms of worship of the Orthodox Eastern Church are precisely similar to those of the Church of Rome. When resident in Syria, I have, on more than one occasion, attended Church with English travellers, who, struck by the presence of pictures, which decorate the walls of all our churches, and by the similarity of the robes of the officiating priests to those worn by the priests of the Romish Church, conceived that they were in a Roman Catholic Church. It needed

some explanation to remove this impression. Most of the writers to whom I allude—I will not mention their names—having received the same impression, they have at once jumped to the conclusion in which they invite their readers to concur, that the Orthodox Eastern Church is only a branch of the abhorred Church of Rome.

There is, as I have shewn, some excuse for the first impression, but nothing could be more erroneous or unjust, than the conclusion to which they have arrived. I cannot deny, that the robes of our priests differ in any material point from those worn by the priests of Rome, any more than I can deny that there are pictures in our churches; but I do most unhesitatingly deny—what has been stated by more than one writer—that there are images to be found in our churches, or that images are worshipped by the adherents of the Orthodox Eastern Church. The offending pictures are not prescribed by the Church.

The Orthodox Eastern Church does not include among its doctrines the worship of saints; in fact, the pictures are merely portraits of holy men, who have led blameless lives, and whose virtues the spectator is invited to imitate by witnessing the honor done to them after death.

It would be unjust and injudicious in me to attempt to conceal from my readers the fact, that the pious and penitent followers of the Orthodox Eastern Church are in the habit of supplicating the prayers of these godly men, who are believed to have passed into the better world, but I have never yet understood that their mediation with the Divinity was prayed for. The only Mediator acknowledged by the Orthodox Eastern Church, is our Lord Jesus Christ; in proof of which I



may be permitted to quote the following passage from its doctrines: "The sufferings and death of Christ are an abundant satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

Begging pardon for having dwelt so long on the only points of evidence which have been brought forward, to establish the relationship between the Orthodox Eastern and the Roman Catholic Churches, and which, I think I have shown to be totally unreliable, I may, perhaps, be permitted to establish my case still more clearly, by pointing out other and more serious points on which the two Churches are at variance.

In the first place, the Orthodox Eastern Church denies the power of any council to alter or to add to the articles of faith. It protested at the time against the famous council of Trent, since which period the authority of councils has formed an important article in the laws of the Romish Church. The Orthodox Eastern Church acknowledges no other guide and source of doctrine or faith than the Holy Scriptures, as contained in the Old and New Testaments, which are open to all—not proscribed, as is the case in the Romish Church—and are printed in all the languages of the various countries in which the Greek Church has adherents.

It expressly protests against the Romish doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope, and it recognizes our Lord, the Saviour, as the head of the Church. Surely, these are points of the greatest moment, such indeed as ought not to have been overlooked by impartial and truthful writers, when dwelling on the character and doctrines of a vast religious body; but there are other points of an equally important nature.

According to the doctrines of the Orthodox Eastern

Church, the Holy Spirit proceedeth from the Father alone, and not from the Father and the Son as is asserted by the Romish Church, and by the dissenters from the Orthodox Eastern Church, whose origin and history will be stated in another part of this chapter. The Orthodox Eastern Church accepts the death of the Saviour as an abundant satisfaction for the sins of the world ; it holds the doctrine of justification by faith ; it denounces the belief in transubstantiation, and in purgatory ; and it departs in another most important point from the practice of the Church of Rome, by authorising its ministers to marry.

It is not my purpose to fatigue my readers by establishing a relationship between the Orthodox Eastern Church and that of the United Kingdom, or of any other country, I am satisfied with having shewn the little value to be attached to the statements of hasty, ignorant travellers, and with having, I hope, fully established a thorough dissimilarity on the most important points of religious belief between the doctrines and practice of the Orthodox Eastern Church and those of the Church of Rome.

I should have had much more difficulty in doing justice to the claims of the Orthodox Eastern Church in the eyes of the Protestant public, had the writers who have sought to establish its affinity to the Church of Rome, availed themselves of other points of weakness, which my pen can neither defend nor conceal.

First and foremost, to my mind, stands that foolish proceeding, which the priesthood of the Orthodox Eastern Church annually practise on the ignorant and credulous of their disciples ; when, on Easter Sunday, following the example of the miracle-manufacturers of the Romish Church, they pretend to draw fire down

from heaven; the agency employed on the occasion being either a lucifer match or a phosphorus bottle. Other weak points in the Orthodox Eastern Church are the practice of burning incense during divine service, and of requiring a particular, not a general, confession from the faithful before taking the Lord's Supper.

When I returned to Constantinople, after my first visit to England, I obtained several interviews with the head patriarch and with some of the bishops of the Orthodox Eastern Church, of which I am an humble though not a blind adherent. Finding them willing to listen to the remarks of one so much younger and more ignorant than themselves, whose only advantage arose from the experience gained by travelling in foreign countries, I strenuously endeavoured to shew to them how erroneous and ill-judged was their practising of miracles, the burning of incense, and other proceedings by which the senses are tricked, how well calculated they were to disgust the better educated and more intelligent of their followers, and eventually to drive them from the bosom of the Church.

The patriarch and the bishops did not seek to discomfit me by learned arguments or flimsy excuses. Like intelligent men, they acknowledged the practices complained of to be unnecessary if not improper; but they assured me that however sincere their desire to establish a thorough reform, their efforts for the present were necessarily restricted; a choice between two evils being the only course which was open to them.

I was compelled to agree with them that the practice of drawing down fire from heaven on Easter Sunday, as well as that of burning incense in the churches during divine service, had both been established for so many

years, and that the former especially had taken so deep a hold over the imagination of my unlettered brethren, that any attempt to abolish or gradually to abandon either would at once be regarded as irreligious and revolutionary. Rather than incur so great a risk, they were content to continue what they considered the lesser evil; and in the meantime to promote as far as in them lay, the work of education, by means of which alone progress in this direction is possible. To such an answer, of course, I had no reply; and I have endeavoured to aid the good cause of education wherever and whenever it has been in my power.

Such as it is, with all its errors, its imperfections, and its weaknesses, the Orthodox Eastern Church, the "Thistle of Lebanon," most certainly claims precedence in point of antiquity over every other Christian church, and to my mind it as clearly deserves the sympathy of all Christians, especially of all who maintain the Protestant faith. For without other support than the rock of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, without assistance from abroad, and in slavery at home, the Orthodox Eastern Church has withstood the shock of Mahommedan invasion, and has maintained its position in Syria during a bondage of more than twelve hundred years. Nearly all those who now profess its faith must be the lineal descendants of families who acknowledged its authority and professed its doctrines at the time of the Hegira; for one of the first laws of our Mahommedan conquerors reimposed the punishment of death on all Christians who should seek to gain, and on all who should become, converts to their faith. It is only of late years that this law has been allowed to fall into disuse; but it is still most powerful, as the following interesting anecdote will prove.

Not many days ago I received a letter from a friend in Syria, in which amongst other things he informs me of the wonderful fact that the son of a Mufti, whose name and residence I dare not mention, had just been converted from Mahommedanism to the doctrines of the Orthodox Church, notwithstanding this law, and that he had been received into the bosom of the Church at Syra, in Greece, in order to prevent the fact from becoming known either to the Turkish authorities or to the fanatic population.

The gentleman, who has just given us so striking an illustration of the power of truth, is a scholar of some repute, a man of more than average intellectual powers, and naturally of an enquiring turn of mind. Dissatisfied with the faith of his fathers, he quietly made himself acquainted with the doctrines of the leading Christian churches in the East, and after a searching investigation into their relative merits, after lengthened arguments with several priests of both churches, and after a close study of the Holy Scriptures, he finally resolved upon renouncing his allegiance to the Prophet, Mahommed, and upon joining a church which accepts the mediation of the Saviour.

His mind once made up, he immediately announced his desire to be received into the bosom of the Orthodox Eastern Church to the priest in his own neighbourhood, who, however, declined to receive so distinguished a convert, from fear of incurring the anger of the Mahommedans, and perhaps of bringing the obnoxious law into fresh operation. Nothing daunted by this refusal, the conviction of the necessity of his reception into a Christian Church having taken so deep a root in his mind, he at once endeavoured to succeed in other places.



With this object in view, he wandered from town to town, traversing nearly all Syria in search of a priest, who would dare to hear his recantation of Mohammedanism, and who would dare to hear his profession of faith in our Lord; but all was in vain. Wherever he went he was met by a refusal, on the same grounds as had been assigned by the priest to whom he had at first applied. Eventually he was under the necessity of leaving his wife, his family, and his property to the care of Providence, while he proceeded to Syria, in Greece, where he happily encountered no further obstacle to the attainment of his heart's desire.

I am happy to say that there is a prospect of this pious and deserving person obtaining a valuable engagement. Having found an opportunity, I communicated the case to that noble philanthropist, the Earl of Shaftesbury, the President of the Protestant College at Malta, who has taken a deep interest in it, and who has promised me that he will try and make an opening for him in that excellent institution.

This simple fact strikingly illustrates the power which the followers of Mahommed still exercise over the timid priesthood of the Christian Churches in Syria, and the awe with which the latter regard the laws of the land in which they live, though in this instance, at least, centuries have elapsed since this particular law was enforced.

How great, therefore, the claims of the Orthodox Eastern Church upon, and how close its affinity to, the Protestant Churches of Western Europe! Oppressed by its rulers, neglected by its brethren in the faith, suffering under the general impoverishment of the country, maligned by many who upon a closer investigation would have declared themselves its warmest

friends, the Orthodox Eastern Church, the "Thistle of Lebanon," still stands forth a monument of the enduring force of truth and faith. It is not easy to make an accurate computation of the numbers of its adherents, since, like those of every other Church in the East, they are not concentrated in any one district, but are scattered over the whole of Syria, living chiefly, however, in the plains. Next to the Mahommedans, they are the most numerous, and I should say, including the Holy Land. that in round numbers they may safely be assessed at more than three hundred thousand.

At the head of the orthodox Eastern Church are four patriarchs ; one at Constantinople, one at Jerusalem, one at Cairo, and one at Damascus. The latter are in some degree subordinate to the first ; but their relations are ill defined, the power of the chief patriarch being in a great measure nominal. Whenever a bishop is appointed by one of the patriarchs in Syria or Egypt, the intervention of the patriarch in Constantinople is appealed to, to procure the sanction of the Turkish government. This sanction, I may mention, has never been withheld by the successive sultans—a degree of toleration hardly to have been expected from the fanatical followers of Mahommed.

The patriarch in Damascus is called Patriarch of Antioch, the patriarchal see having remained in Antioch until that city was destroyed by earthquakes and revolutions. Each patriarch can, within his own province, suspend members of the priesthood, though they should have attained the dignity of bishop ; but cases of this kind occur very rarely indeed. Considering the number of its adherents, the Orthodox Eastern Church cannot be said to be wealthy. It is true that it has great landed possessions ; but they are most inefficiently

managed, so that its chief sources of revenue are the collections made in the church during the service, and the fees paid for marriage and burial services, and for reading prayers with the sick. These, however, are all voluntary payments.

In common with all other ministers of religion within the Turkish dominions, the priests of the orthodox Eastern Church are highly favoured by the law. They pay no taxes whatever; they cannot suffer imprisonment or any other punishment at the option of the Turkish officials, who are hardly less ignorant than they are extortionate, and whose power over the other inhabitants is enormous. The only remedy against an offending priest is to report him to the patriarch of the province, who, either by himself or with the advice of the head patriarch in Constantinople, ordains such a punishment as the case may deserve.

As a rule, the ministers of the Orthodox Eastern Church are extremely ignorant and very poor. The salaries of the patriarchs rarely exceed £500, and many of the ministers are not in receipt of more than £20 or £25 a year. The greater number of these have received no education; their sole qualification for their office being, in most cases, the good opinion of their neighbours and some knowledge of reading or writing.

As the eloquent author of "The Crescent and the Cross" truly says, they are frequently chosen by the laity of their district from among the lowest mechanics, and the election is invariably confirmed by the patriarch if there be nothing against the character of the elect.

Colleges or educational establishments for the priesthood the orthodox Eastern Church can hardly be said to possess. It would be ridiculous to give that name to

the convent in Jerusalem, in which the young student is initiated into the foolish practices I have already spoken of as being annually practised at Easter, and in which he acquires a fair portion of the spirit of hatred and envy with which the various religious denominations within the walls of the Holy City regard one another.

Much has already been accomplished by the enlightened men who have taken up the cause of the apostles, and who are labouring hard to dispel the dark cloud of ignorance which hangs over the minds of my countrymen like a heavy cloud. With the knowledge and the elements of the true faith which they are zealously disseminating, I do not despair not merely of a thorough reform of the Orthodox Eastern Church, but of a thorough change in the mutual relations of the several religious bodies. Where there was hatred there shall be love, and the spirit of envy shall be transformed into the spirit of emulation.

The service of the Orthodox Eastern Church is always performed in the native language, and consists of prayers, scripture-readings, a sermon, which is, however, generally only a simple explanation or commentary on chapters from the Bible, and in singing hymns. The priests, as I have previously mentioned, wear robes differing but very little from those worn by the priesthood of the Church of Rome. It is customary to separate the sexes during the service; the galleries being devoted exclusively to the reception of the females, and the body of the Church to the males. Only the old men are allowed seats, of which there are very few, and the young men are forced to stand.

At the commencement of the service, the officiating priest traverses the church, scattering incense from a

burner. During Lent, strict observers of the law abstain from all animal food, even from eggs, milk, butter, and cheese, and they further fast from night till noon. At this period they also abstain from the use of all spirituous or vinous fluids. At all seasons of the year it is customary to fast on Wednesdays and Fridays. The sacrament is usually administered twice a month. It consists of unleavened bread and wine mixed together, and is administered by the officiating clergyman with a spoon, the formula used on this solemn occasion being nearly the same as that employed in the English Church.

I have mentioned the existence of dissenters from the Orthodox Eastern Church in Syria. They are called Greek Roman Catholics, and have existed rather more than one hundred and fifty years. The founder of this sect was a priest named Karolus, who had been elected patriarch of Antioch, or, as the functionary is called, patriarch of Damascus.

The election was, however, not ratified by the head patriarch of Constantinople on account of the doctrines held by the new patriarch on the subject of the Holy Spirit. Karolus maintained, in contradiction to the established doctrine of the Orthodox Eastern Church that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father alone, that it proceeded from the Father and the Son, as is asserted by the Roman Catholic Church. On a closer inquiry into the religious tenets of the elect of Damascus, it was discovered that his opinions were heretical also on other points, for he was found to entertain a very favourable bias towards the doctrine of purgatory and the doctrine of supererogation. In consequence, the patriarch of Constantinople dispatched to Damascus a more trustworthy follower to fill the vacant post.



While the dispute was still pending, Karolus had been indefatigably working to increase the numbers of his own adherents ; and the see of Rome, but too glad to have so eligible an opportunity of adding to its influence in a quarter where all its former efforts had been in vain, immediately dispatched some of its cleverest emissaries to Karolus for the purpose of inducing him not to give way in the dispute, and promising him the support of the Pope.

These emissaries were but too successful. What their arguments could not effect, they obtained by money and promises. Amongst other things, they held out hopes to Karolus of preferment in the Romish Church, and finally their influence prevailed over the advice, the entreaties, and the solemn admonition of the chief patriarch of Constantinople. Karolus entered the Church of Rome, humbly and submissively acknowledging the authority of the Pope, by whom he was created bishop of Antioch. Since then all the well-known energies of the Romish propaganda, all the wealth, the influence, the tactics of that unscrupulous power have been used with great effect to increase the number of dissenters from the Orthodox Eastern Church.

In this case, there may be found additional evidence of the unscrupulousness of the chief agents of the authorities at Rome. Though it is the law of that Church, and one that is most strictly enforced, that Roman Catholic priests shall live in perpetual celibacy, the Greek Roman Catholic priests, as the dissenters from the Orthodox Eastern Church are called, are permitted to marry, and they are further allowed to retain the service of the Church from which they have deserted. Perhaps these anomalies have been purposely continued

in order to facilitate the perversion of the faithful adherents of the Orthodox Eastern Church by inducing the belief, that the two Churches are identical.

Like the parent Church, the Greek Roman Catholic Church is scattered throughout Syria, but its adherents reside chiefly in the plains; their numbers may be computed at about sixty thousand. It was most successful in making proselytes while Syria was under the Egyptian rule; at which period the government seemed to make it a point to place in positions of trust and emolument chiefly such persons as acknowledged the authority of the Pope of Rome.

It must not be supposed that this preference was the result of a peculiar partiality on the part of the pachas for the Roman Catholic Religion; for it has been tolerably well ascertained, that this favourable bias was the result of the direct mediation of the Sacred College at Rome, whose members, it may be imagined, rendered some equivalent service to the Egyptian government.

It is not many years since Bakary Bey, a member of the divan in Damascus, procured from Maximius, the patriarch of the Greek Roman Catholics, permission to erect a Church in that city; and with that permission the still higher authority of Mehemet Ali, who ordered the church to be built without giving the petitioners the trouble of first obtaining a firman. This church is now one of the finest in Damascus, and is yet another of the records existing in Syria of the unscrupulousness exhibited by the "wild beast" of Rome in the selection of its agents.

In 1840, there arose a great dispute between the heterodox patriarch Maximius and the orthodox patriarch of Antioch, on the dress worn by the priests in the Greek Roman Catholic Church. The latter com-

plained that the priests under the tutelage of his Romish opponent did not conform to the exact rules of dress prescribed by the head of their own Church, but continued to wear garments similar to those worn by his own priests. This the orthodox patriarch considered to be highly offensive, and even dangerous, since the ignorant and credulous public were but too likely to be enticed by the similarity of dress, into the belief, that the doctrines of the two Churches were identical.

The matter was referred to Constantinople; was discussed by the contending parties before the head patriarch of the Orthodox Eastern Church, and finally submitted to the decision of the Turkish authorities. After both parties had wasted much time, great patience, and no inconsiderable sums of money, the authorities either found the gold of the Orthodox Eastern Church to be both brighter and heavier, or else the influence of the Czar was too powerful for them, for they at last decided that Maximius and his priests should wear a looped-up hat to distinguish them from the priests of the Orthodox Church.

It is not only in trifles, however, that the Turkish authorities are called upon to decide between these two Churches—the Mahommedan laymen to arbitrate between Christian ministers; unhappily their interference is called for in matters of far higher importance.

As I have shewn in another chapter, the mutual jealousies, of the Christian sects, their envy and hatred, have reached such a pitch, that, on the most sacred festival in the Christian year, when devout Christian pilgrims from all parts of the earth, who have wandered to Jerusalem for the purpose, are in the holiest of all localities within the Holy City, Turkish

soldiers are required to keep the peace between them. At the very tomb of our Saviour, Christianity is disgraced by the quarrels of its believers, and Mahommedans are called in to prevent them from shedding the blood or taking the lives of one another.

Political animosity has perhaps more to do with this melancholy exhibition than simple religious discord. Hasty and ill-judged have been the measures of protection which the great powers of Europe, at different times, and from motives dwelt upon elsewhere, have accorded to one or the other of the religious bodies in the East. Great Britain, France, Russia, and Austria, have all, without due cause, interfered to protect, as they say, their protégés from undue oppression, but the result of their protection has not only brought them into unpleasant and dangerous contact with each other, excited and nourished envy and hatred among the protected, but has still further shaken the foundations of "our ancient ally," as the Porte is called in England, whose existence is said to be so intimately bound up with the maintenance of that unintelligible paradox, "the balance of power in Europe."

At the moment of writing these lines, the diplomatic representatives of the great powers resident in Constantinople, the ministries of the great powers themselves, are in the agonies of negotiation, as their peculiar proceedings are diplomatically termed, and the noble representative of Great Britain has been hastily ordered to return to the seat of his mission, in order that the British influence may not suffer from a partial or one-sided decision of the case.

## CHAPTER XVI.

AMONG the Christian inhabitants of Syria, the Maronites, in point of numbers, if not in the simplicity of their faith, certainly take rank next to the devout followers of the Orthodox Eastern Church, and the brief review I propose to take of their history and position will, I think, sufficiently establish for them a claim to be placed among the most interesting Christian races or nations which can be found in any part of the globe.

To the present hour they continue to inhabit the mountains of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, in which twelve centuries since they sought and found refuge from the violent measures to which the general Council of Constantinople had recourse, in order to punish them for their adherence to the Monothelite heresy. Driven from their homes in the plains and cities of the land, they established themselves in perfect security in the mountain fastnesses, which have enabled them on more than one occasion to set the power of the Egyptian and Turkish Governments at defiance, and to afford to others, no matter what their faith or origin, an impenetrable asylum against the persecutions of their enemies. Europeans or Easterns, Christians or infidels, flying before the persecutions of political or religious bigots are still received with open arms and untiring hospitality by the Maronites, whose forefathers always practised



the virtues learned in adversity—virtues which they have most successfully inculcated on the minds of their descendants.

No greater proof can be brought forward of the excellence of their principles, their courage and integrity of heart, since even from that early period they made Lebanon what Hebron and other ancient cities were among the children of Israel. The extraordinary liberality and hospitality displayed by the original inhabitants can alone account for the striking amalgamation of Christian and Pagan races, and for their having inhabited the mountains, for so long a period, in perfect amity and good-will towards each other, except when bad feelings have been excited by the intrigues or intermeddling of the foreign powers, whose interference has at all times been ruinous to the country.

So complete has been the political union of the inhabitants of the Lebanon, notwithstanding all the differences between them, that for centuries they submitted to be governed by one head: So great is the reliance to be placed upon those brave mountaineers, and so high is the general estimation of their character, that when, in the year 1821, the genius of British diplomacy and a royal administration of the navy, had cleverly contrived the famous battle of Navarino, and the European consuls and residents in Syria were obliged to fly from the wrath of the Mahommedans, who set no bounds to their hatred of the Franks, they unanimously selected the home of the Maronites as their best and safest asylum. There they remained for nearly a year and a half, protected and respected by their hospitable hosts, and safe from the vindictive longings of the Turks, who dared not venture beyond the lowlands in pursuit of their prey.

This was perhaps the first occasion in which educated

Europeans obtained a closer inspection of the customs, manners, and religion of the Maronites ; and it is to be regretted that none of them have given their experience to the world in a popular shape. Many of them still dwell with pleasure upon this remarkable era in their lives, and many are the tales which they tell at their own firesides, of the dangers they encountered on their road, and the life they led in the mountains. Indeed, I have heard several of the gentlemen who were among those who sought an asylum in Lebanon, declare, that with the exception of the unpleasantness of being in a measure cut off from all communication with Europe, they seldom remembered to have passed a pleasanter eighteen months, invigorated by a delightful and pleasantly cool climate, in a country abounding with shooting of all kinds ; while for those who loved the study of botany there was an inexhaustible fund of amusement and occupation. Even here, and at a time too when they were apparently menaced by surrounding dangers, the *youngsters* amongst the Europeans could not forget their predominant attachment to fun and mischief ; and an anecdote has been frequently told of a poor old Maronite priest who prided himself extremely on the excellence of the fruits produced by the garden attached to the monastery which he inhabited, and which I believe were really of a very superior quality, and who had for many months reckoned on the autumn of 1821, as likely to prove the most prolific season he had yet known ; when lo ! he was surrounded by a horde of gnats and bees in the shape of wild young Europeans, who, despite the height of his walls, and the depth of his ditches, and the distance they had to come every night, succeeded night after night in rifling the orchard and carrying off just those fruits that were upon the very turn, and which

promised to be the *first fruit* of the season. It is needless to say that the old priest was sadly perplexed and annoyed ; the last persons in the world to be suspected were these very identical young men ; first, because they lived so far off—secondly, because, in the presence of the old priest, they deported themselves with so much decorum, and attended so regularly to the Sunday service, that the old priest would as fain believe himself guilty of a felony as harbour any suspicions against the real offenders. He began to fear sadly that he must needs have some black sheep amongst his own flock ; and as the depredations continued nightly, despite watching and all other precautions, he lost all patience, and after service one Sunday pronounced an anathema against those parties who had persisted in stealing his fruit if they did not immediately desist from their wicked practices. All was vain ! Weeks rolled on, still the fruits were missing, and still anathemas were thundered on a Sunday from the pulpit, till the old priest in a fit of despair caused all the unripe fruit to be plucked at once, determined, as he expressed himself, at least to benefit by a few preserves and jellies, since he was not permitted to taste any of his ripe fruit, and so the affair ended for the time being. Some years after, however, when many successive rich harvests of delicious fruits had completely obliterated the misfortunes of that particular year from the old priest's memory, he chanced to be riding through the very identical village to which his fruit had been regularly conveyed of a night, and was astonished to find growing in the wildest profusion specimens of the apricot, peach, and nectarine, of which he had heretofore prided himself that he himself was the sole possessor. Enquiry was set on foot, and the Druse at whose house the young men had been lodging stated, that some years

since, when some young Franks were occupying his house, they used to receive large baskets of fruit, which they had told him were sent to them as presents from a convent, and that the kernels and seeds of these fruits had been preserved and planted, and, with very little attention or care, had succeeded to admiration. Thus, out of evil resulted good, for if it had not been for these young thieves, the mountaineers might have been debarred from obtaining many excellent fruits, which are now growing wild upon the mountains.

The Maronites derive their name from Maroun, a holy recluse, whose good actions and moral teachings were like so many dew-drops upon the wilderness of sin and wickedness in which some of the inhabitants of the East were wandering, about the beginning of the fifth century. They were subsequently associated with the Romish Church by one John, the Maronite, who joined the Latin insurgents against the authority of the Greek Emperor. They remained subordinate to the Church of Rome during the next six hundred years, though they continued to maintain their own patriarchs. This attachment and subjection to Rome was, however, considerably diminished by the events which followed the crusades, and they for a short time maintained an independent position. Rome, however, never lost sight of its former subjects, and perpetually strove to win them back to the fold of which the Pope is the shepherd; and after forty years of negotiation and intrigue, Pope Eugenius succeeded in procuring from the Maronites a solemn renewal of their recognition of the Papal authority. From that date they have adhered to the Romish Church, enjoying privileges which the temporising unscrupulous conclave in Rome conferred and maintained, though contrary to the laws of their



Church, in order not to lose so large a body of supporters. What these privileges are, will be seen in the following account of the people and their religious practices.

The connection which exists between the Maronites and the Church of Rome is, in point of fact, maintained almost entirely by the priests, who, of course, have very good motives for their conduct. Were it not for the almost slavish subjection of the people to the priestly authority, this connection with the Church of Rome would long since have been violently shaken, if not entirely severed, for the second time.

I have said that they inhabit the mountains of Lebanon, but I ought to be more precise, and to state, that they are chiefly to be found in those parts of the mountains which are in a north-easterly direction from Beyrout. They are a most industrious, contented, happy people, whose chief occupations are confined to weaving silk, and to tilling their ground—which, in some parts, the rocks and the soil render exceedingly difficult—for cultivating their mulberry trees for silk worms, which they do with great zeal and good effect.

So thoroughly has nature fortified the district they inhabit, and so manly and courageous are they, that until the year 1843 they had never been conquered by the Mahommedans; and though they had politically agreed to the payment of an annual tribute to the Porte, they were at that period without a garrison. They have experienced great vicissitudes at different periods, but throughout their whole history, I find that each crisis only served to add to the power and influence of the priesthood, who, in all things, social as well as political, have an incredible hold over the people. They are the



legislators and the administrators. As they cunningly work together with the Sheikhs, nothing but a thorough change in the system of education will enable the people to shake off their fetters.

Their creed and ritual partake both of the Greek and Latin churches ; but, though they reverently adore the Virgin, they allow no images of any kind in their churches. What is still more remarkable, is the fact, that their communion admits the administration of both wine and bread, differing from the Roman Catholic Church in which only wafer is administered, and from the Protestant Church in which the bread and wine are given separately, by the bread and wine being mixed together, and administered to communicants in a spoon. Any priest before ordination is allowed to marry, but the patriarchs and bishops must live in the strictest celibacy. So great is the deference paid by the laity to the priesthood, that whenever one of them meets a priest he is sure at least to kiss the priest's hand, and ask his blessing ; while some of the more pious or perhaps more servile of the women kneel before the priestly robe as if it were as holy and as sacred as the altar at which its wearer officiates. As a rule, however, the people dislike being called Roman Catholics ; indeed many of them openly profess to hate the See of Rome, and, were it not for the very Romish tendencies of the protection and education they obtain at their schools, which in other respects are really excellent, the Maronites would certainly, in a very short period, disconnect themselves from all association with the See of Rome.

An attempt was made not very long ago by an American missionary to introduce a purer Christianity among them ; but the unfavourable results of his brief

residence at Dayr-al-Kamar may be solely attributed to a want of caution, in too abruptly opposing the doctrines of the established faith before educating the people.

A legate from the pope is perpetually resident on the Lebanon, where the chief monastery of the Maronite priesthood is situated. At various periods, too, there have been missions sent out from Rome in order to prevent any slackening or lessening of the papal influence. At this moment there is a Lazarite mission in Syria, the members of which have succeeded in persuading several fathers of families to part with their children for the purpose of having them educated in Rome. They have also constructed a hospital, and established schools for male and female children at Beyrout. The convents are among the few religious institutions within the dominions of his Imperial Majesty the Sultan, which are allowed to use the pleasant-sounding church-bells; and the Lebanon\* is among the few localities in the East where the European traveller can experience the pleasant feelings and genial associations of his country, which are excited by the solemn sound of the Sabbath-bell, feelings that were unintelligible to me until I had spent more than one Sabbath in Europe. This privilege is a terrible ear-sore to the Mahommedans, who detest the Maronites more than any other Christian sect; partly because they know the Maronites entertain the belief that they are destined to put a period to Islamism, by enticing French interests into the East.

I may observe, here, that in point of fact the Maro-

\* Latterly, the Jesuits at Beyrout, as, indeed, at all the principal towns in Turkey, and even in Cyprus, have succeeded in introducing the use of bells, even in some instances, for schools, factories, and private families.

nite faith has no firm basement; for heretofore they seem to have been a people such as is described by St. James, chap. i. ver. 6,—“ He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven of the wind and tossed.” And they continue to be lukewarm; neither one thing nor the other; Roman Catholic in their adherence to the Pope and in the observance of certain outward forms of religion—Greeks as regards the privileges accorded to their priests—Protestants in the acknowledgment of both the wine and the bread in the Lord’s supper—and nondescripts in the method of its administration. If we take a review of their *waverings* we may be led to some conclusion on this head. First, we are told that their sect originated with a hermit of the fifth century: nearly 600 years they appear to have adhered to their original faith, but in 1182 they submitted to the pope’s authority. Barely a century elapses when they are found wavering again, owing to circumstances then transpiring in the East. Nearly 300 years afterwards they again return to the Church of Rome; this was in 1445. And now, 400 years after that, we find their creed to consist of an amalgamation of all the Christian sects. This cannot last long: they must eventually become one thing or the other; either *de facto* Roman Catholics, or else *de facto* Greeks or Protestants.

Notwithstanding the Maronites live under a theocracy, from the peculiar situation of the Lebanon with regard to the lords of the surrounding land, the admission to many privileges was rendered not only advantageous, but absolutely requisite; and from these facts the notions of liberty entertained by the Maronite are far more exalted than those meagre ideas that possess the brain of the inhabitant of the plains. Their patriarch, subject to the pope’s approval, is elected by the

bishops of the nation: to him they pay extraordinary deference. The bishops are also possessed of immense influence, and their word is tantamount to law. The local authorities are careful to avoid anything that might cause offence to these prelates, well knowing the influence they exercise over the minds of the people. Owing to this influence, crime is in a great measure unknown amongst the Maronites; for offences, however trivial, are immediately judged by the clergy, and satisfaction and retribution at once exacted. Marriages without the bishop's consent cannot be consecrated; and any *faux pas* on the part of young people usually terminates in their marriage.

The word of excommunication or anathema, amongst the Maronites, is "*fra-massoon*"; and he or she on whom it is pronounced, is as much avoided and abhorred as the plague-stricken. All houses are closed against a "*fra-massoon*," and he may starve of cold and hunger amongst his own family and friends, with none to compassionate him. I remember being told by a person not overburdened with common sense, that upon one occasion, some years ago, a friend of his had given shelter and food to a "*fra-massoon*"; and that, happening unfortunately, soon after, to quit this world, his body was put aside in a cave, in accordance with the usual custom. Ten years afterwards, the coffin was accidentally opened, and the spectators saw with horror that the corpse was quite fresh, and presented no signs of decomposition. So unusual an occurrence excited great curiosity, and inquiries being made, it soon became known that the departed had transgressed the laws of the Church, by giving hospitality to one whom its ministers had cursed. The relatives of the deceased instantly went to the priest, and, after seeing him



pretty freely, obtained his services to read a certain number of prayers over the corpse, and to pronounce upon it the forgiveness of the Church. Hereupon nature resumed her usual course, and nothing further was heard of the subject.

The Maronites, under the influence of priestcraft, are noted as being most inhospitable to all excepting those professing their own creed; and even European travellers have been refused a shelter for the night, supposing that they were missionaries. They are a very superstitious and credulous people, and delight in absurd legends. They perform pilgrimages to Jerusalem and also to the tomb of Noah, supposed to be situated in the village of Kerak, between Beyrout and Baalbec; and about this they have endless ridiculous stories. They also pretend to have discovered the tomb of Moses, at a place a short distance from where the late Lady Hester Stanhope used to live.

One great advantage which the Maronites possess, and which must eventually prove very beneficial to them, is the fact, that education is spreading universally amongst them. There is a native printing-press at work in one of the monasteries; but though the generality of the men are generally well-bred, the women are grossly ignorant and rude. Lady Francis Egerton found cause to complain of this sadly: "If I fastened my door," says her ladyship, "they called and knocked and battered at it, until I feared it would yield to their efforts; and this at five o'clock in the morning, whilst I was in bed."—A pardonable curiosity, however, amongst a semi-barbarous people; for so the women must be termed, until they are admitted to the privileges conferred by education, and social intercourse with civilised English women.



The Maronites, in common with the Greeks and the Armenians, pay an annual visit to the Cedars of Lebanon, for the celebration of the feast of the Transfiguration. Here they celebrate mass on a rough stone altar, at the foot of the cedars: in the open air—in “a temple not made with hands”—some of them offer up prayers and thanksgivings, quoting those very Psalms of David which were composed and written expressly to commemorate God’s mercy and loving-kindness, as in connection with the immediate spots which surround these cedars.

A wedding amongst the Maronites differs in some material points from the ordinary marriages in Syria; in the first place, the priest is considered the principal negotiator, and on his report as to the suitability of the match, much of the future happiness of the young people may be said to depend. After preliminaries have been arranged, gifts of dresses, and the like, are exchanged, but the bashful *fiancée* is supposed to be in utter ignorance of all that transpires, to spurn these gifts, and to dislike even the mention of her future husband’s name. The priest blesses the bridal clothes of the bridegroom before he adopts them. When the friends go to fetch the bride, a mock combat ensues, in which, however, without bloodshed or bruises, the bridegroom’s party is invariably victorious, and the women carry off the veiled bride in triumph, attended by her female relation. The bride’s house mourns her departure, and she herself makes no secret of her sorrow to leave; but the *arus* (bride) no sooner makes her appearance than the shouts and acclamations, and firing off muskets by the assembled multitude, seem effectually to drown any discordant sounds of lamentation; the procession, however, moves at a funeral pace,

for it is thought highly indecorous that the bride should appear as though anxious to arrive at her new abode. On crossing the threshold, she is saluted by the women with the cry of welcome, and clapping the hands; and after her veil has been removed, she is covered with one of red gauze, and then made to sit in state on the divan at the upper end of the room. Here she neither smiles nor speaks, but rises on the entry of each venerable female friend, to embrace her, and kiss her hand. Both men and women, though in separate apartments, pass the night in noisy hilarity. Before sunset the bishop, or in his absence the senior priest, attends at the bridegroom's house to perform the ceremony; all symptoms of mirth are immediately abandoned, silence is proclaimed, and then the service proceeds very much after the fashion of the Greek Church, only that both the groomsmen and bridesmaids are crowned by the priest as well as the couple being married, and the *bridegroom* places the ring given him by the priest on the bride's finger. Towards the end of the marriage ceremony, the priest puts a piece of blue riband, with the picture of a saint attached to it, round the bridegroom's neck. The new married bride is confined to her house for the space of a month after her marriage.

I have already mentioned the extreme facility with which the Maronites believe many fables and superstitions that have any connection with religious matters; and perhaps I shall be pardoned for introducing in evidence of this, a fact which occurred about eighty years ago, which attracted the attention of the traveller Volney, and which is still spoken of very frequently among the inhabitants. There are several nunneries belonging to the Maronites in the Lebanon, and it was in

one of them, about the period mentioned, that Hindyeh, a young nun, forced herself into great notoriety by the severity of her penances, and the extraordinary piety she displayed. Having found many friends, her reputation increased to such an extent, that she was at last declared capable of working miracles; and the simple-minded Maronites, having provided the funds, she was duly installed in a religious establishment of her own. Her nunnery, and the other establishments in connection with it, had flourished for more than twenty years, when a suspicion was suddenly excited, that several of the nuns, of whom many had died, had met their death by unfair means, and that most improper practices prevailed within the cells. An unhappy merchant of Sidon, who had placed two of his daughters in the establishment, disturbed by these reports, determined to visit the place and make inquiries. On his arrival, he was told he could not see his daughters because they were ill, and finding that all entreaties were in vain, he proceeded to Dayr al Kamar, and obtained an armed force from Emir Yusuf, the chief of the mountain, and the attendance of the bishop, to enquire into the matter. The result shewed the existence of a system of wickedness and profligacy, exceeding in iniquity anything ever known, to which one of the daughters of the merchant in question had already fallen a victim, the other being at the time almost dead. The holy, or rather unholy, Hindyeh, was seized and imprisoned, with her accomplices, and the examinations which were made fully criminated them all. The arch priestess of all this wickedness managed to escape from the convent in which she was imprisoned, and to reach a locality in which she possessed a large body of adherents and believers. Notwithstanding the

disclosures which were made, the hypocritical career pursued by this nefarious woman, so completely imposed upon the soft credible Maronites, that she died respected and revered, and to this day is acknowledged as a saint. Need I say anything more to prove the extent to which this weakness is carried among the *fellahen*.

The number of Roman Catholics in Syria, including both the Armenians and the Greek Roman Catholics, as one portion of them is called, may be stated at about 90,000; and, as they differ in no important points from the Roman Catholics of the West, they may be passed over without further mention. I may observe, however, that the Armenians are not so generally respected as their Christian brethren of other denominations; and, in illustration, I would remark, that at the grand ceremony on Easter-day of bringing down fire from heaven, the Armenians are driven to obtain a portion of it as best they may; their priests and pilgrims being generally forced into the most remote corner of the sacred edifice.

The Copts, or, as we are accustomed to call them in the East, "the Oobbeet," are the followers of one "Mār Yackoob." Their chief doctrine is that Christ possessed but one nature; and they agree with the Orthodox Eastern Church in saying that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Son. They are governed by a patriarch who resides at Cairo, and is called patriarch of Alexandria, whose authority is very great over the whole sect; indeed, their most prominent characteristic may be said to be an almost slavish obedience to their priests. Like the Maronites they invariably kiss the hand of any priest they may encounter in the open street, or country; and many of them prostrate themselves before the holy man. Though



they conform to the Hebrew practice of circumcision, they also baptize their infants. It is customary with them to pray seven times during the twenty-four hours, according to the rules prescribed by the patriarchs; and it is, moreover, a common practice with many of them to learn by heart the whole of the Psalms, some of which they invariably repeat before proceeding to transact any business, in the belief that this devout recurrence to the Psalmist will ensure prosperity to the affair they have in hand.

Generally they are very clever, especially at figures. A few of them have recently joined the Orthodox Eastern Church, with which they have many practices and doctrines in common, and a small section has been very powerfully worked upon by a Lazarite mission, the members of which succeeded in persuading several parents to part with their children for the purpose of having them educated in Paris.

It is presumed from the remarkably Jewish cast of their features, and from their adherence to the Hebrew law, that they are of Jewish origin; but other evidence on this point is wanting. Though I have said that they were called after one Mar Yackoob, their existence as a Christian sect is clearly established at an earlier period; and indeed it has been said by many of the learned visitors to Syria, that they are as old as the Nestorians. At all events they were only organized by Mar Yackoob, who founded a perfect theocratic form of association or government. Indeed, wherever we turn, whether it be to the several Christian sects or denominations in the East, or to any one of the pagan forms of religion, we find the same fact in all. They have all been founded and organised by a priest, and, whether for good or evil, priestly influence has, in most instances,



prevailed until the present day. It is also believed that the Armenians were in some way connected with, or absolutely descended from, the Copts; and there is very good evidence of great intimacy between the latter and the Nestorians, the last of the Christian bodies in Syria, and now to be described. In point of numbers the Copts are very unimportant. They do not exceed 300 in Syria, but there are a great many of them to be found in Egypt.

The Nestorians now claim my attention; but as very little is known concerning them in my own neighbourhood, and as I have never had an opportunity of visiting them in their own mountain-homes, I can only relate what has been told me by travellers.

It is believed that they are of Jewish origin; but there is no positive evidence on the point, beyond their features, their observance of certain Jewish customs, and their respect for portions of the Hebrew code of laws. It cannot be doubted, however, that they have maintained Christianity in the East for more than sixteen hundred years; and that, as primitive Christians, who have not degenerated from the simple form of worship enjoined by the apostles of our Lord, they are entitled to our deepest respect and veneration.

They are divided into two sects, the Simple and the Papal Nestorians; but the former do not acknowledge the latter as a part of their body, and declare that they are in no way connected with the Nestorian Church. They have two patriarchs, who reside in the mountains near Julamerk, and whose influence, together with that of all the priesthood, is very great indeed. Here again we find existing a purely theocratic form of government. The priesthood legislate politically and socially, and they administer the laws judicially, as well as attend

to the religious wants of the community over which they preside.

The habits and manner of life of the Nestorians are so primitive, that their simplicity has become proverbial in the East. Their belief differs from the Orthodox Eastern Church, by declaring the existence of two persons in the Saviour, as was propounded by their founder, Nestorius, in the beginning of the fifth century. The sacrament of bread and wine is administered to all by the officiating priest, in almost the same way as this ceremony is performed in the Greek Eastern churches. They are most hostile to the Roman Catholics, whom they hate.

Including the Nestorians inhabiting Persia, I believe there may be altogether about 100,000. On the confines of Persia, they are engaged in perpetual warfare with the Koords.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE POPULATION OF SYRIA, CONTINUED.—THE PAGAN INHABITANTS.

HAVING dwelt at some length upon the several bodies of Christian inhabitants of Syria, I must entreat my kind readers' pardon if I endeavour to make my description of the Pagan portion as brief and condensed as possible. Of course, I need not advert to the Mahomedans, the faithful followers of the Prophet. As I have stated before, they comprise by far the largest proportion of the inhabitants of the towns and lowlands of Syria, and are lords and masters over the rest of the population.

But, besides the orthodox Mahomedans, we have in Syria a very large number of heterodox followers of the Mahomedan faith, who are called Metoulis; and who, though they certainly are less numerous than their orthodox brethren, are an infinitely more interesting people. They are followers of Ali, the other sect adhering to Omar. They may amount, in round numbers, to about 35,000; but as they have selected for their homes some of the most inaccessible parts of the mountainous districts of the country, their numbers cannot be very accurately ascertained. They are said, by many persons, to belong to the same section of the Mahomedan faith as the Persians, who also believe in Ali; but they exhibit some peculiar doctrines and customs, which establish an essential distinction between the two.

Like many of the Persians, they worship Ali, and they expect the advent of the Messiah in the person of the twelfth Imam of his line, whom the Turks allege to have been slain in the battle of Karbela, in which he engaged with the caliph of Babylon; but whom the Metoulis believe to have been transported to Arabia, by the miraculous interposition of the Divinity, and from whence he is to return in triumph, to re-establish the race of the Imams on the throne, and to punish all who opposed him or his followers. When the expected Messiah does appear, they believe that he will assume the government of the whole world—that he will visit with the most dreadful punishments all who shall have denied him—and that he will render unto all true believers eternal happiness.

In expectation of the advent of this Messiah, the Metoulis keep horses, money, and clothing constantly in readiness for his arrival; and whatever is once set apart for this purpose, is held sacred for ever after, and cannot be used by an ordinary mortal.\*

They believe in the transmigration and gradual purification of the soul, which, according to their belief, eventually becomes a bright star in the heavenly firma-

\* It may be as well here to relate an anecdote in connection with the late Lady H. Stanhope, whose eccentric life has already excited so much interest all over Europe. It came to the knowledge of some Metouli chiefs that her ladyship, like themselves, kept apart two beautiful mares ready caparisoned, on which no one had ever yet ridden; attributing this to a religious prejudice similar to their own, they came to the conclusion that she ought to be considered as one of themselves. A council was accordingly held, but after many pros and cons the vote was unfavourable to her ladyship's election, because, as one of the chiefs asserted, she was so excessively eccentric, as to ride on one side of her horse, and not to wear trousers. I believe that this occurred before her ladyship had adopted the Oriental style of dress.

ment. The first apostle of Ali, in Syria, was Abou-Abdallah-Mohammed, who was most successful in making converts, but, having excited the envy and hatred of some of the chief people of Damascus, he was imprisoned and burned alive as an infidel and blasphemer. From this circumstance he has been styled the first martyr.

Though the first apostle of the new faith was thus summarily extinguished, the light of his doctrines was not smothered with him, and it may be considered certain that the manner of his death was mainly the cause of the rapidity with which they spread over the country immediately afterwards. As is generally the case, persecution lent strength and vitality to the cause, and many sought the honour of a martyrdom similar to that which had befallen Abou-Abdallah Mohammed. However, the faster the new religion spread, the greater activity did the Orthodox authorities develop in putting it down. Priest after priest was being drawn and quartered, hundreds of men, women, and children were butchered or buried alive, to gratify the atrocious passions of an ignorant people, and a still more barbarous government. Nevertheless, the new faith prospered, and the Metoulis began to assume a position of influence and power in the country; but after numerous vicissitudes, the butcher Djezzar, who had been made governor of Syria, succeeded by cunning and treachery in prostrating their power, and destroying their strongholds. Thousands of the Metoulis were executed by his orders, and even under his eye, and, like Mehemet Ali, who watched the destruction of the Mamelukes, so did Ahmed Djezzar amuse himself by watching the death struggles of hundreds of the Metoulis who had been hurled from the battlements of Nabatieh into the Kasmieh.



Under persecutions like these, the strong arm of the authorities, aided by the passions of a fanatical body, combining together against them, the Metoulis gradually lessened in numbers, and consequently lost the influential and powerful position they were beginning to acquire. Politically this sect may now be said to be prostrate, but they cherish the memories of those of their forefathers who fell in the defence of their religious independence, and many an evening's hour is passed by the people listening in rapt attention to the numerous anecdotes of the firmness, the courage, and the devotedness of the martyrs for their faith.

The localities they live in entail habits and customs which naturally tend to rear a hardy and courageous race. Their method of living is simple in the extreme; but, though the stranger who may visit their mountain-villages is sure of the greatest hospitality, it is, nevertheless, of a peculiar character. They never admit within their dwellings any person who does not belong to their own persuasion, nor do they allow any one but a Metouli to use their furniture or domestic utensils. Should a Frank or a Jew by accident touch a mat or a pot belonging to them, it is instantly cast away as defiled and unclean. To receive the wandering stranger there is erected, in every village, a house for the purpose, in which the visiter is ever most bountifully provided for. Strange to say, however, their dislike to contact with others, extends no further than their own dwellings. In the open air, or in a house belonging to a person of a different persuasion, they are alike indifferent to the presence of Christian or Jew, conversing and associating with them as freely as they zealously avoid permitting them to enter their own dwellings. They are an exceedingly clean people, never sitting down to a meal without having performed their ablutions.

It is owing, perhaps, to the paucity of their numbers, but still more, I think, to the gradual decline of the power of the Maronite, that the Metoulis exist untroubled in their mountain fastnesses. But should any attempt be made by any government, or by any other religious body in the East, to wrong or to subjugate them, I am convinced the Metoulis would not submit without a very severe struggle, in which their native ferocity would once more appear on the surface, to their own disadvantage, perhaps, but still more to that of their enemy.

A good deal has been written respecting the Druses, who are the most curious, and least known section of the population of Syria. The cause of the ignorance which prevails concerning them, and which I am unable to dispel, will be seen in the following account of this interesting and courageous people.

I have been told that several learned men have, at different times, diligently endeavoured to acquire a thorough insight into the religious theories possessed by the Druses, but I have never yet met with any author who has given an explanation or description of them, satisfactory to his readers. Where others, whom I have been taught to respect and revere, have failed, I hesitate to make the attempt, knowing that I shall be unsuccessful. In point of fact, the great mystery which surrounds the religion of the Druses is, I fear, a mystery even to themselves, a shadowy outline, which the initiated are told they understand, and which the uninitiated worship in the depth of their ignorance.

The Druses inhabit the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, or rather the southern portions of the mountain, in which they possess a great deal of land and villages ;

but they are also mixed up with the Maronite and other Christian populations of more than two hundred other villages. They are divided into two classes; the initiated into the mysteries of their religion are called Akkals, and the uninitiated are called Djahils. Both sexes are alike eligible for initiation among the Akkals; in this respect, there is that perfect equality for the female sex, which I so often hear some of my fair friends in England sighing for. But the woman who is a Akkaliah may not marry a Djahil. There is an easy remedy for this, however, since I am told that initiation may be effected on very short notice, and without expense or examinations. Every Thursday the Akkals meet in Khalueh, a temple, or building, erected expressly for the purpose, and in which their religious books, their war trophies, and standards, are kept. Here they sit talking of politics, or reading religious books, and when the general discussions are concluded, the majority go away, leaving only the highest in social rank to discuss the interests of the tribe with the priests. Their chief priest, or as I take the liberty of calling him, their great mystery-man, lives at Bakleen, whence he rules over the whole body. As I have said previously, the nature of their religious belief is a mystery. It is neither Christian nor Jewish, nor Mahommedan nor Pagan. They believe in the unity of God, and in the transmigration of souls, but while they themselves profess to be Mahommedans, they exhibit in their social customs as well as in their features, many points of resemblance with the Jews, and they have no hesitation whatever in denouncing Mahommed as a false prophet, and in disregarding the most sacred festivals of the Moslem faith.

Though so little is known of their present religion, it has been tolerably well ascertained that it was founded by one Darazi, who about the middle of the eleventh century traversed Syria, preaching the doctrine that the real Caliph Hakim was the incarnation of God, and the most perfect manifestation of the Deity. Name and strength was, however, first given to the new creed by one Hamza, who denounced Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mahommed as the false prophets, and declared himself to be the incarnation of the spirit of universal intelligence. In his creed, he either forgot or wilfully omitted all notice of a future state of existence. Since that period, this peculiar faith has gained many proselytes; and the Druses are now, next to the Maronites, the most numerous religious body in Lebanon who are not Mahommedans.

Leaving their mysterious creed, to deal with the people themselves, I may state, that they are easily distinguished by their features, being, generally speaking, muscular, well-made men, active, and middle-sized, and enabled to undergo great fatigue. Their courage is not to be daunted. The women are generally very handsome, with tall, slim figures, black hair, and beautiful blue eyes. The disposition of the men is a strange mixture of open-hearted hospitality and morose vindictiveness; but they are strictly honourable, and have never been known to break a promise. In all their transactions they deal uprightly with one another; but this cannot be said to be the case when they transact business with others: their creed admits of their practising imposition upon infidels to their own faith.

I have already observed, that there exists a great resemblance between the ancient Scottish clans and the mountaineers of the Lebanon. In support of this,



I cannot do better than to quote what Volney says, when speaking of the Druses:—"When the emir and sheikhs had determined on war at Dayr al Kamar, criers went up at night to the summits of the cliffs, and cried aloud, 'To war, to war! Take your guns, take your pistols! Noble sheikhs, mount your horses; arm yourselves with the lance and the sabre: meet to-morrow at Dayr al Kamar. Zeal of God! zeal of combat!' This summons, heard in the neighbouring villages," continues the same author, "was repeated there; and as the whole country is nothing but a chain of lofty mountains and deep valleys, the proclamation passed through its length and breadth in a few hours. These cries, from the stillness of the night, the long-resounding echoes, and the nature of the subject, had something awful and terrible in their effect. Three days after, fifteen thousand men were assembled at Dayr al Kamar, and operations might have been immediately commenced."

To strengthen their respective clans, is the Druses' main object through life; and to effect this, they almost invariably marry amongst themselves—preferring their own relations and poverty, to the richest dowry or a foreigner. Their creed admits of but one wife; but they allow of divorces. If a Druse says to his wife, "Go to your father's house," and does not say to her, "Come back," it is considered a divorce. Their jealousy far outstrips the Mussulman's: any conjugal infidelity is certain of being requited by death: no intercession, however powerful, can avail aught in these cases; even where fathers have made intercession, brothers have become the executioners of their own sisters. Any man can divorce his wife upon paying a certain sum; but divorces are of very rare occurrence.



The every-day life of the Druse is monotonous in the extreme ; even their children at an early age inherit their insipid manner of life, and leave the healthful recreation of a good game at *damah*, to sit down in a circle, and ape their parents in discussing politics. The Druse, like most of the natives of Syria, is an early riser ; and the first thing he does after he has gone through his morning ablutions, is to command his wife to set before him a large bowl of freshly-drawn goat's milk, or *dibs*. In this he sops his bread ; and, making a hearty and wholesome breakfast, shoulders his gun, sticks his kanjur in his girdle, lights his pipe, and then goes forth to attend to his daily occupations till mid-day. If it be the season to plough, he harnesses his oxen, and treads heavily after the furrows till nigh upon mid-day, at which time his wife or one of the family brings him out his substantial mid-day repast. In this interval he has perhaps rested himself half a dozen times, to sit and smoke a pipe : or, if a fellow-creedsman passed, he has stopped to exchange a few words—complain of the heat, ask the news, the lowest price quoted for wheat, and so on ; but you seldom hear them laughing or joking with one another, and never by any chance singing or whistling ; they have no idea of a tune, no taste for music, unless it be the music of money rattling in their pockets ; and this has greater charms for them than the pipe of Tityrus had over the Sylvan woods. At this mid-day meal there is another fresh bowl of *laban* milk in addition to a goodly supply of *boryhol*, and, in summer, cucumber and some chillies, or the batingan stuffed with hashed mutton and rice.

As the sun sinks behind the conical tops of the western hills, the Druse unyokes his cattle and drives

them homeward, himself shouldering the plough. Now it is that, if ever he enjoys himself, the Druse indulges in a little relaxation. If he be fortunate enough to be possessed of a supply of powder and shot, he deviates from his right path, leaving the oxen to find their way home untended, and shouts and throws stones into every bush and down every glade he passes. Sometimes a hare starts up, sometimes a covey of partridges, or, may be, a jackal; but, whatever the game chance to be, he fires, and that with so steady and correct an aim, as to be almost certain of securing the victim. Even jackals' skins are valuable, and will fetch their price.

Of an evening they assemble at one another's houses, and there, with pipe in hand, seated in such an attitude that their knees are on a level with their nose, they talk politics by the hour. They are generally a dissatisfied, gloomy, and grumbling people, and their usual topic of conversation is exactly what John Bull is so much laughed at for, viz., the hardness of the times. They pull to pieces the pacha, the emir, the effendis—lament over the prospects of a bad silk crop, or a worse wheat harvest, speaking feelingly of the general lack of money—foretell that things will be certain to go on from bad to worse—predict a famine—prophecy a murrain amongst the cattle—see in the yellow tinge of the western atmosphere the cholera—smell out of the heavy night-dew an interminable catalogue of maladies, as absurd and unknown as any of the foregoing calamities; and, having worked themselves up to an extreme pitch of wretchedness, they disperse for the night, and retrace their steps to their respective homes, croaking the while, or hooting gloomily to one another just as a parcel of ravens would croak or owls hoot as they wing their

way to roost, when the distant growl of thunder foretells the coming storm.

The Druses are great hypocrites in religious matters. One of their religious books gives them this liberty, for it says:—*Embrace the religion of those who have power over you ; for such is the pleasure of our MAOULA, till he, to whom the best times are known, shall unsheathe the sword, and display the power of his unity.*” Hence, with the Turks, they pretend to be devout Moslems—fast when they fast, and feast when they feast. With the Christians they are equally devoted to the Adrah Mariam—the Virgin Mary ; and in private they despise and detest both : but I believe that the Druses have really great faith and confidence in the English, whom they suppose to be all Protestants ; and their idea of a Protestant is that their religion is a species of free-masonry, which very much resembles their own. Of late years political struggles on the mountains have served rather to strengthen this belief, for the Druses were invariably supported by the English ; and the native attachés, agents, and other people, not only of the Consulates in the neighbouring towns, but also English travellers, lost no opportunity of impressing this fact upon the minds of the Druses who were already predisposed to such a belief from the fact of a tradition long existent amongst them, that many of their noblest families were descended from some of the princes amongst the Crusaders.

The Druses never introduce the subject of their religion before others ; that is to say, never in such a form as to hold it forth as an argument, or an inducement for others to become proselytes, or to inform strangers of their doctrines, but they confidently affirm that a great number of their co-religionists inhabit the

vast continent of India, and declare that they are to be met with even in China, from which they believe they themselves came.

They suppose, that in England there are to this day many of the Akkals, or initiated, but of later years their confidence has been much shaken; and *apropos* of this, I quote an extract of a letter from one of the Akkals of the Druses, sent to me from Lebanon in 1845:—"There are many English travellers, and some men apparently of much wisdom, who have visited us and conversed on subjects of religion, and they endeavour to persuade us that in their country there are many people who profess a creed similar to our own: this was particularly mentioned by a tall English emir. I wish you would enquire into this matter, and write us your opinion clearly; and should the report be verified, the existence of such co-religionists would at once entitle us to claim the protection of the English upon the same grounds as the Maronites are protected by France."

It is said that, in the official report of M. Desmélouises, then a French Consul in Syria, this belief of the Druses that they were allied to, and descended from, noble European families, was found serviceable to the French agents, when the allied forces appeared off the coast of Syria, for the purpose of expelling Ibrahim Pacha and the Egyptian troops, and they acted upon the imagination of the Druses so powerfully, that little or no inducement was requisite to cause them to side with the Europeans.

There is one thing to which the Druses are much addicted, and which sadly deteriorates from their general character for civilization, nay, I may even say for being courteous gentlemen—this is, their fondness for raw meat. Whenever a gazelle is shot, or a kid killed, the raw kidneys and heart are luxuries for which the Druse

epicure will contend with angry words; and such is the force of example, that even Christians in the neighbourhood have adopted this system of cannibalism, washing down every mouthful of raw meat with a strong glass of *arakey*. European authors accuse the Christians of the plains, and especially the women, of being guilty of a like atrocity, saying that they eat meat in their *kubbas*; but the fact is, what meat they use in these *kubbas*, is first so finely sliced up, and then so unmercifully thumped, till it becomes a perfect paste, that the very friction and heat more than half cook it; besides which, this meat is mixed with chillies, onions, and boyhol, and the proportion of meat to wheat is one to ten.

Outwardly the Druses keep up the appearance of friendship with their neighbours, but the intrigues of political agents, and the wary cunning of Roman priests, have of late years tended sadly to interrupt the harmony that existed between the Druses and the Maronites.

Peculiar and interesting as my readers will have found the Druses, they certainly are not more so than the Yezidees, and the Nosairiyeh, who are both less numerous, and still less known. These tribes also inhabit the mountain districts; but they live in much greater isolation than the other religious bodies, and in consequence, their numbers are not to be ascertained with anything approaching to precision. They do not inhabit any particular province, but I am perfectly well aware, as has been stated by one writer on this subject, that there are several hundred Nosairiyeh resident in the small village of Salahiye, about one mile from Damascus. The locality, however, in which they are most numerous, is undoubtedly the range of mountains north of Mount Lebanon. Like the Yezidees, the Nosairiyeh worship fire, and the principle of evil,



but I have not heard or seen so much of the latter or of their habits and customs, as of the former, owing to the inaccessible nature of the country in which they principally dwell, and partly also to the hardy independent character of the people themselves. I can assure my readers, that it is a task of no slight difficulty, and even great danger, to penetrate into the Northern Lebanon, and it has very rarely indeed been successfully accomplished. In illustration of this fact, I may narrate here the experience of a friend of mine, who desired personally to obtain all the information concerning this people, which a trip into the most northern parts of the Lebanon could procure. Having made all his arrangements for the purpose, he departed, provided with a passport, or firman, from the Turkish authorities, addressed to all the sheikhs of the mountain-tribes, ordering them to shew the bearer every civility, and to afford him every protection during his journey. Armed with this document, he proceeded on his journey without much apprehension. During the first day's travel among the hills, he found the firman most effective, the sheikhs lending him every aid to get on. But he had no sooner left the immediate limits within which the people came into direct and frequent contact with the authorities, than he found the case was very different; argument and entreaty became necessary, where the mere sight of the firman had formerly been sufficient to procure the gratification of his wishes. Having succeeded in obtaining quarters for the night in the abode of a small sheikh, who condescended to be hospitable to the stranger, my friend soon got into conversation with his entertainer, and ultimately explained the whole object of his journey. The Sheikh listened in silence, twisting his moustachios with Eastern solemnity, and displaying some astonishment in his features at what he evidently

considered the very hazardous course which my friend seemed bent on pursuing. After supper, the sheikh returned to the subject, and laboured seriously to impress upon his guest's mind the nature of the numerous dangers which he must encounter if he continued his journey. To the sheikh's argument respecting the want of all roads, the ruggednesses of the mountain paths, sudden precipices, and dangerous fords, my friend laughingly rejoined, that he relied on a stout pair of legs, a firm hand, and a steady eye, and that he would not shrink from his object deterred by such difficulties, which a strong and bold man might readily vanquish ; and in reply to the sheikh's still more serious sketch of the dangerous character of the tribes through whose territories he must pass, my-friend, still laughing, flourished what he considered his all-powerful firman. The sheikh asked permission to read it ; it was granted, and having perused it, returned it to its owner. After some moments' silence he rose from his mat, and approaching my friend, said to him, in an under-tone : " Friend, your firman certainly may procure you protection and assistance on your outward journey, but it says nothing concerning your return ; be advised, retrace your steps and get your firman amended, if you must inquire into our condition and habits, but you would do much better to remain among your friends. We Nosairiyeh do not like strangers." My friend stared at this address, which many of my readers may consider most lawyer-like, and worthy the nice distinctions between words which I am told the English lawyers delight to make ; but it had its effect, for we are yet without the full account of these people which my friend would have furnished us with. On the following morning he retraced his steps ; and on his arrival he appears to have forgotten to apply for any alteration or addition to his firman, and to have

preferred the inglorious ease of home to the dangerous search after knowledge among unexplored mountains, inhabited by barbarous infidels.

Though my friend failed so egregiously, I am in a position to state that, in addition to their adoration of fire, and of the evil spirit, they are in the habit of worshipping the womb. This fact having become known, several travellers have been induced to state, that there exists a peculiar religious sect in Syria who are called Womb-worshippers, but I am sure that the only persons who deserve that name are the Nosairiyeh. The occasions on which this peculiar part of their religion is developed are extremely limited; indeed, I believe that it takes place but once a year, when the greater majority of the whole people assemble together in a cave, which is set apart for the purpose, and which is known only to themselves. I can add, moreover, that no one is admitted to these rites, but who is acquainted with the distinguishing sign or token by which they recognise each other. When they are assembled, a variety of prayers adapted expressly to the occasion are recited, and when, what I may term the religious portion of the service is concluded, the men and women present have recourse to the most indelicate proceedings, which are the peculiar forms of worship of the womb.

About a year since, I happened to be at a convent about two days' journey from Tripoli, and while there, I had an opportunity of seeing a number of these curious people. Some days previous to my arrival, a young woman belonging to them had been brought to the convent in a state of mental aberration. I ought to say that the convent is consecrated to Saint George, who is believed to possess especial power for the cure of madness, and for whom the Nosairiyeh, as well as

most of the mountain tribes, profess great respect and veneration—illustrating their professions practically, by the payment of an annual donation of oil, corn, and fruits, for the use of the convent. The young woman in question had been restored to reason, having been confined in chains during her whole stay, in one of the cells behind the altar, and kept on very low diet indeed. I will not say which part of the treatment had been most efficacious in curing her, but the devout believers in the power of the saint, declared that he had visited her during the night, and by his presence driven out the evil spirit. Her friends, being made acquainted with her miraculous recovery, came to reclaim her just after my arrival. Contrary to the general Eastern custom, there was a large number of women mixed up with the men, moving apparently on a footing of perfect equality with the ruder sex. While they remained within sight of the convent, before and after reclaiming their recovered companion, they appeared to care for nothing besides dancing and singing. One of their dances was very much like an English country dance, with a great deal of shaking of hands. I found them to be a powerfully built, muscular race, with open honest countenances; they were all thoroughly equipped and armed. In their dress the women differed from the general costume of the country, inasmuch as they wore very long and very flowing garments, of a kind usually only worn by men.

My account of the inhabitants of Syria would be incomplete without some description of the Yezidees, of whom there are some thousands in the country. They are most numerous in Koordistan, where they are all comprised in one general body. In Syria, however, we are accustomed to divide them into three tribes—the



worshippers of the sun, the Shemisees; the worshippers of the devil, the Sheytanees; and the cut-throats. I do not mean to say that the latter portion are greater cut-throats than their co-religionists of the other two sections, for as for as the Mahommedans, with whom they come chiefly into collision, the whole of the three divisions are alike murderously inclined. Like the religion of the Druses, that of the Yezidees is an indescribable mixture of nearly all the religious creeds of the East and West. They respect Christ and the Christian saints, but they do not disavow Mahommed and Moses. They baptize their children, but they conform also to the Hebrew practice of circumcision. They commemorate the birth of the Saviour, but they also celebrate the feast of the Passover with all the forms and solemnities customary among the Jews; and they also abstain from all the food which is considered unclean by the Israelite. While worshipping but one God, they profess profound veneration for Ahriman, the prince of darkness, and they also adore the fiery element, bowing before the rising sun. In praying, they are careful to kneel with their faces towards the East. Indeed, it would seem as if, doubtful of salvation under a simple faith of their own, the presiding minds of the Yezidees had collected the principal items from all religions in the world, in order to make sure of the right one. Some of them even do not hesitate to make an avowal of this kind. The most peculiar feature in their religion, is the extreme respect which they pay to the devil, who is never mentioned by his right name, but is always mysteriously spoken of *as the great incognito, the bird of Paradise*, and the worship of whom is always carried on after sunset. I am assured too, that his Satanic eminence



is always present on these sacred occasions, and is accustomed to acknowledge the honors paid to him by his credulous worshippers by a yell or scream of a most unearthly kind, its effect being to prostrate on their faces the whole of the parties present. Their head-priest possesses an extraordinary amount of influence over the whole body.

The Yezidees are a brave, open, confiding, honest, industrious, civil race, combining with these good qualities, however, an inordinate passion for warfare, civil and national, and a great proneness to robbery and pillage on a large scale. They are actuated by their intense contempt and hatred towards the Mahommedans to the committal of many excesses against the followers of the Prophet. Indeed, they are firmly convinced that they cannot perform a more meritorious action—an action more advantageous to themselves, both in this and the next life, and they absolutely take pleasure in ridding the world of a Mahommedan. This spirit of hatred is fully returned by its objects, who detest the Yezidees, and who consider the very name to be synonymous with all that is evil and treacherous.

It has been stated of late years, that the traditions which exist among this people, and which tend to establish their descent from the ancient Hebrews, are founded on fact, and that they are in reality a remnant of the lost tribes of Israel. I am not sufficiently learned on this subject to trace the links of the connection, but I may unhesitatingly state, that the conviction of its truth is rapidly spreading among the people themselves.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## APPEARANCE AND COSTUMES OF THE PEOPLE.

I FEAR my readers will consider that I have been rather tedious in the last few chapters, but what I have said I consider indispensable to put them in possession of the real state of my beloved country; and to make them generally acquainted with the character, the religion, and the manners of its inhabitants. I shall now devote a few pages to a description of the appearance and costumes of the different races.

The large tract of territory extending from Aleppo, in the north, as far as the desert upon the outskirts of Gaza and Hebron, in the south, is inhabited by the variety of sects and people, whose peculiar religious ceremonies and occupations have been described in the preceding chapter. Commencing with the district of Aleppo, we shall find inhabiting that city,—first, the Aleppine-Greeks, most of whom are, by creed Roman Catholics, and by profession merchants, silk-weavers, and manufacturers of fine silken robes, such as are worn by the majority of the inhabitants, male and female. The peculiar costume of the natives of Aleppo is the most striking feature of that truly oriental and magnificent city. On a feast-day, between the hours of prayer, the gardens in the environs of the city are thronged with crowds of well dressed men and

women ; some walking, some riding, and others seated on their *seggadeh*, or rugs, under the pleasant shades of the fragrant walnut-trees, with the chibuk or narghili in their hands, or else cowering upon the bank of the river, angling for fish. We will, with the reader's permission, place ourselves beside a merry group who are musically inclined, and hope to attract the attention of another group of laughing girls, who, though well muffled up in their white *izars*, still shew sufficient of well-proportioned features to convince the beholder that beauty lurks beneath the muffling veil. However, we take our station here, not to watch them, but those that pass to and fro, and to guess with the utmost precision, by their costumes, what their belief is, and in what peculiar calling of life they are engaged : first, then, comes an old gentleman riding on a white Egyptian ass—the very fact of his being the possessor of one of these valuable animals at once stamps him with respectability ; but apart from this, the tall *kulpak*, or Persian cap, on his head, and the long, loose flowing robes proclaim him to be a descendant from one of the most ancient, wealthy and respectable families of Aleppo. The privilege of wearing this peculiar kind of head-gear, exempts the wearer, by virtue of a firman obtained from the sublime Porte many centuries ago, from the capitation tax, and many other minor disagreeables to which the less fortunate rayahs are exposed. This firman was obtained either by interest, or for some service rendered by their ancestors to the Turkish government, at a period when all the rich trade of the Indies passed through Aleppo, and when, as even up to the latest period, that unfortunate city has been exposed to the incursions of the wild desert tribes, who frequently molested the

Baghdad caravans, and even broke into the khans and strongholds, carrying off warehoused merchandise to a considerable amount. The resistance offered to these marauders by the wealthier merchants of Aleppo, led to their obtaining special favors from the Porte; and these favors, be it said to the honor of the Turkish Sultans, have descended as an heir-loom from father to son, even down to the present day, and the insignia, as already mentioned, is the *kulpak* which yonder citizen carries on his head. By creed he is a Roman Catholic, and devout in the observance of fasts and festivals; by profession a *serraff*, or money changer, and any of the European merchants who may require a few thousand piastres on an emergency, will go to this man, and he will advance the requisite sum instantly; his business-office is not much longer than an ordinary sentinel's box, but then his house, which is in the suburbs of the city, is replete with comfort and elegance, and amongst other furniture and requisites, you will find massive porcelain jars, and other equally costly relics of the former Indian traffic, which have been handed down from father to son, and which are never brought into active service, save and except upon festive occasions, when a marriage or a christening is celebrated in the family.

Next to this wealthy aristocrat, our eyes encounter a couple of natives on foot, both well clad, with rich silk scarfs girt round them, but on whose hands and arms the indelible dark blue tinge at once indicates their occupation, viz., that of dyers; generally speaking, they profess, in most parts of Syria, the tenets of the Greek church, and they are almost a peculiar people of themselves, inhabiting the suburbs of a town for the sake of convenience, and in order to be in the immediate

vicinity of level verdant plains, on which, during the summer months, they stretch the dyed cloths to dry. It is seldom, however, that these people make use of any other dyes than the commonest blue and black—such as is well adapted, from its inferior materials, to meet the meagrely supplied purses of the greater mass of the population of Syria, blue *shintians* being invariably the every-day costume of masons, mechanics, day-labourers, and peasants occupied in agricultural pursuits; hence it is that the profits on labour are small and insignificant, the occupation is incessant, and the demand never fluctuating. From this circumstance also, the indigo imported from England and other parts of Europe invariably meets with a ready and profitable sale amongst this class of people, who are the merchant's best and surest customers, and whose annual consumption, reckoning one year with another, so little varies, that a careful trader might calculate to within a few pounds' weight, the exact annual demand for indigo of any given village in Syria, and accordingly carry on a safe and profitable trade in this one article alone. These dyers usually marry, and are given in marriage amongst themselves, and the children are brought up to the trade of their fathers; but in all other respects, they are the same as the rest of the Greek community, attending regularly at their churches, strict observers of fasts and festivals, and mingling freely with all their fellow citizens, of whatever creed or calling.

Next to these comes the sedate Armenian, clad in a sombre grey cloak, trimmed with ermine, and a slovenly black handkerchief bound round his almost threadbare *gibbeh*; he is walking with a countryman, and a fellow creedsman of his own; and though the latter is the better clad and cleaner looking, he is far from being



the wealthier; they are both, however, on the same intimate footing as though equals in birth, riches, and station; both out more for exercise and to talk about business, than from any wish to join in the recreations that are passing around them. The first man—the meaner looking of the two—is very possibly possessor of about 20,000 piastres; he is a banker of the Pachalik, and right-hand man of all the Pachas who come into power; from them he derives no small profit, but it is not from this source alone that his revenues flow; even the poor man who is now his companion, is one among the many of his countrymen, who pay into his coffers an annual tax on certain stipulated conditions. In Aleppo, and all over Turkey and Syria, almost every cook in European and wealthy Oriental families, is an Armenian; these Armenians come from their own country in search of employment, and on arriving at Aleppo, being friendless, and without any recommendation as to character, etc., they seek out those who profess the same creed as themselves, and by them are introduced to the protection of a banker, who will guarantee their honesty, provided the man pays him an annual per-centage upon his wages. This is agreed to, and a compact being made, the *sarraff* himself exerts his best influence amongst the circles of his acquaintance to obtain for his protégée a situation in an opulent family. As the English are invariably the best pay-masters, he first tries them; if he succeed, the young man is placed under the tuition of a professed cook of his own creed, and his career in life commences. The banker adds the man's name to the thick folio volume, in which he has already registered those of the numerous tax-payers that help to enrich his coffers; and though, on an average one with the other, they only pay about twenty

piastres per annum, still, considering the vast numbers who are under this obligation, the total amount derived from this source makes a considerable sum. On the other hand the banker, who possesses a certain extent of influence with the Pachas, stands by his countrymen in any case of emergency, and if needs must, is ready to advance any money to procure the release of a delinquent, or to help in his flight, as the Armenians are extremely jealous of their character for honesty and integrity, and it may with truth be observed, that with very few exceptions, they make excellent servants — faithful, steady, and industrious, and are seldom, if ever, addicted to liquor; if they do cheat their own masters, they take care that no one else in the household shall. And this is a notorious fact, particularly in Aleppo, that the prices of meat and vegetables, etc., are fixed by a tariff every year amongst the Armenian servants, and as their name is legion, and every second family has an Armenian cook, the greater mass of the people usually pay at the same rate or proportion for their provisions, though it is well-known that the poorer classes obtain the same supplies from the very same tradesmen with whom the wealthier families deal, at a lower price; still, for convenience' sake, these peccadilloes are winked at, and the Armenians justify their petty thefts, and accommodate their consciences to their perpetration, by the reflection, that if they did not cheat, *others* would, and thus further encourage dishonesty amongst the rest of the servants.

The Armenians have passed by, and another couple of individuals attract our attention; their faces are long and sallow, their features marked, eyes sunken, beard profuse, and in the contracted brow there is much that indicates selfish thoughts; the meanness of their scant

attire, is only to be surpassed by the filthiness of their general appearance. Did you notice yonder young Mahommedan spit on the ground, or in the faces of these two as they passed him, while he petulantly muttered, that this day would prove to him an unlucky one, from the moment he had encountered these two men? You will ask the reason of this; it is because they are of that once mighty people, Yahooodee, or Israel, whom Mahommedans regard as the cursed of God, the refuse of the earth, who are treated with less consideration than the meagre curs that slink along the streets; for a Jew does not dare to pass by on the right hand of the Moslem. Yet these Hebrews are now so well inured to hardship and insult, that they wisely pursue their way, regardless of all around, their whole soul wrapt up in the one absorbing thought—gain. If words and blows are sometimes inflicted upon them by the lords of the land, they at least have the gratification of knowing that there is not one amongst their brethren, but who avails himself of every opportunity to swindle and defraud every customer with whom they may chance to have transactions; and even the coins which pass through their hands never escape without being diminished in weight. As an instance of their innate propensity for defrauding, I will record an anecdote which occurred at Damascus some years ago. A Jew having been convicted of coining *saadeeyeh* (9 piastres), was punished by the government by having half his beard shaved off, and mounted on an ass, with his face turned towards the tail, and a European hat on his head; in this way he was conducted through the city, preceded by a crier, proclaiming his crime. Through bribery and interest he was set at liberty, and shortly afterwards recommenced his nefarious practices; the

second time, however, he resorted to the fling of coin, and being again discovered, the Cadi ordered his hands to be cut off, as the most effectual means of preventing a recurrence of such tricks. Even this did not put a stop to his cheating, for having initiated his son into his arts, they together devised the mode of dissolving a part of the money in strong acid. Being for the third time discovered, both father and son were hanged.

The very name *Yahoodée*, or Jew, is tantamount in the East to swindler. Yet it is a most remarkable fact, that fallen and degraded though the race be—their position only equivalent to a state of perpetual serfdom—you never meet with a Jew who gains his livelihood by manual labor, or by begging for his bread. They neither till the ground, nor follow the plough, nor yet exercise themselves in any agricultural pursuits; neither are there amongst them day-labourers, or mechanics; and all this arises from the species of Freemasonry which links these fallen people together, and induces them to assist and support one another in times of the greatest need and difficulty. Hence it arises that every Jew, from an early age is, as it were, launched into the world by the assistance of his co-religionists. They usually begin life in the pastry-cook line; for to sell fruits, would be like carrying coals to Newcastle, in such a country as Syria, where every man has his own garden, or, if he be not possessed of this, the markets are stocked to overflowing. After this, they become petty tradesmen, and with a stock-in-trade of some half-dozen loaves of sugar, a few pounds of coffee, spices, etc., the whole perhaps not exceeding three or four hundred piastres, he migrates to the surrounding villages, barter or sells, comes back again and replenishes his stock, and so goes on adding mite to



mite till he is enabled to set up a *Dekkan* in the bazaar. Having commenced to turn the wheel of fortune, he climbs up warily, and it may be slowly, yet securely, to an ample independence for his old age; and there are many very wealthy Hebrew families in Syria, whose origin might be traced to such as I have just described. When a Jew has once amassed wealth, it seldom if ever happens that he falls low in the scale again.

In later years, the condition of this persecuted people has been much improved in the Ottoman dominions, and they may be now said to enjoy all those advantages and privileges which are offered to other foreigners residing within the limits of the Turkish dominions; hence, it is to be hoped, if we may be permitted to judge by the signs of the times, that the day is not far off when they will be again restored to their land, and when in the words of the prophet, it may be said, "*They shall be my people, and I will be their God.*" But these privileges have not always been enjoyed by this unhappy people; not more than twenty years ago the barbarities practised upon them seem almost incredible. A friend told me of an incident that occurred in Servia when a famine, or a pestilence, had ceased to ravage the country, there was a grand procession and thanksgiving, and in the edict of the Governor, it was not only proclaimed, but carried into execution, that at every quarter of a mile a donkey and a Jew should be sacrificed; thus classing them together, and ruthlessly shedding the blood of two of the most unoffending creatures of the Creator. But the Jews and their sorrows and persecutions are, I trust, passing by, as a firman has lately been obtained from the Turkish government, through the influence of Sir M. Montefiore, which secures the Jews like privileges with the Christians; this boon was presented to



them by Col. Churchill, who, in 1841, during his official residence in Damascus, exerted himself strenuously and successfully to relieve them from the consequences of the persecution they had undergone in the well known affair of Padre Thomaso.

And now comes a stately horseman, whose very steed seems to paw the ground more proudly than others, as though conscious of the fact that he carries on his back one of the lords of the land. This is a Turkish Effendi, his long loose cloth cloak is thickly trimmed with ermine; his horse-trappings are magnificent—his countenance full of importance and gravity—his beard black, and wagging to and fro in a haughty commanding style; he looks neither to the right nor to the left—acknowledges no salutations, though the people rise as he passes, and bow their heads subserviently to the earth; behind him rides a gaily dressed youth, carrying in his hand the ready lit *chibuk*; look at the amber mouth-piece, richly set with brilliants and emeralds, and then you may form some conception of the importance and wealth of this great functionary. The occupations of the Turks are various, for being lords of the land they, and they alone, in most parts of the country, occupy the posts of Government. Amongst them, we may first rank the independent beys and effendis—nobles of the land, wealthy from inheritance, and most generally possessed of extensive gardens and plantations, these are the aristocracy—they have no cares as to how they shall live—no thought as to their sustenance—their mansions are capacious—their studs splendid—their repasts sumptuous—their harems filled with the choicest flowers of Georgia and Circassia. They regularly attend the Mosques, and keep their fasts and festivals, and if they have anything to trouble their minds, it most

assuredly arises from a similar inconvenience to that which the *fool* in the Scriptures was exposed—viz., the want of extensive granaries wherein to warehouse their fast increasing riches. Next to these we may reckon Government employés, who, though virtually invested with greater authority than these beys (who hold no official position), in reality are subjected to their whims and caprices. Of this class are the Pachas, Cadis, etc., etc.,—men who are generally well off so long as they remain in office, but whose position would be very dubious indeed were they once deprived of their main staff in life—their salaries.

The rest of the Moslem population may be divided into three classes, viz., merchants, tradesmen, and household domestics; the latter, if they be Mahomedans, will seldom serve the native Christians, though they will sometimes place themselves under European masters in order to be protected from taxation, or being enlisted into the army. Of the former, from the time of the Caliphs, Turkey has been celebrated for the wealth of her merchants, and for their upright, honest method of transacting business. However, though the uprightness of the old Mahomedan merchant remains, his wealth is on the decline, and is passing into Christian hands. Most of the opulent merchants of Baghdad are Moslems who, regularly once a year subject themselves to a long and inconvenient journey to Aleppo, and return so as to superintend and watch over their own interests; and like the old tales of the Arabian Nights, rich scented spices spread their odour over the desert far and wide. Besides these, other merchants from Mecca turn a devout pilgrimage into a mercantile transaction, and carry back with them many rare articles—otto of roses, and other scents, which usually

attract a multitude of eager purchasers. The trades followed by most Mahommedans, are those of carpenters, locksmiths, tanners, shoemakers, sawyers, saddlers, and saddle embroiderers. Of these, the saddlers and the shoemakers rank first. The carpenters are expert tradesmen, and Damascus abounds with turners, known to bring work to a highly finished state.

And now these too have passed before us, and a fresh sight attracts attention. Fierce-looking fellows, three in number, now appear, their heads girt with long flowing silk handkerchiefs, of a bright yellow colour; their beards are thick, black, and curly; their features sun-burnt; their eyebrows knit, and there is a lurking savage look in their eyes which speaks volumes of treachery and bloodshed. Long loose striped dresses with horse-hair girths, loose shintians, and the ordinary Syrian red boots, complete their costume. They are mounted on Arab steeds of the purest breed; slung by their left side is a scimitar of fine Damascene steel; each carries on his shoulder a long polished *Roomah*, or lance, from which hang tassels of various gay colors. These horsemen are Bedouins of the Desert, who, perhaps, have come hither to spy out the land under the pretence of a friendly visit on mercantile business; but what is more likely to be the reason, to find out when next a caravan, or travellers, will pass through the desert. No one fears them now, since their number is too small, when compared to the crowds which are on the alert and passing to and fro. Still, these Bedouins may even at this very moment be plotting a similar carnage and attack to that which was made at Aleppo, so recently as 1850. Notwithstanding the ferocity of their nature, "their hand still being against every man," yet they never are guilty of a breach of faith or friend-

ship. As an instance of this, an Arab was once at Damascus, and received civilities from a Damascene, who gave him some bread and tobacco. About two years passed, when it so happened that this man was going to Aleppo with a caravan, which was attacked, and happily for all, the traveller was recognised by one of the Bedouins, who proved to be the very man who had received hospitality at Damascus.

Next on our panoramic sketch we find two hardy labourers, fine robust looking men; these are the *fellahen*, and their vocation in life is restricted to tilling the ground; but there are some amongst them who follow the occupation of farriers, and some few in the larger towns are blacksmiths, tinkers, and shop-keepers, but those that occupy our attention at present, wear too healthy an aspect to be taken for citizens. They are peasants from a neighbouring village, and to them Sunday is a day of rest, and a great boon indeed; during the week days they are early risers (up with the lark, and even before this "*bird hath shaken the dew-drop from her wing*") ; to them sleep has been a boon indeed—a luxury that few who are not accustomed to hard manual labour can be supposed to enjoy. The careful thrifty wife, although her husband is an early riser, was up before him, lighting the fire, and preparing his early meal. He gets up, and goes through his ablutions; and I may here remark, that Europeans in general, and especially the English, form a very incorrect notion as to the habits of the poorer class of natives in Syria, since few people are more careful in their rigid adherence to cleanliness, though their brown sun-burnt skin gives strangers an idea to the contrary. His breakfast consists of a few loaves, resembling Scotch cakes, on which cheese, and on fast days olives, mashed together are

carefully rolled up; sometimes, as an extra dainty, a little cold stew from yesterday's dinner, or a small dish of Leban, gives a relish to his keen appetite; and having finished this he shoulders his plough, loosens his cattle, and followed close at the heels by his house dog, goes forth to his labour till evening. He has generally arrived at the field of action before the sun gets up to look at him, and he never leaves it till the fiery sun, red with heat, has sunk below the horizon. Truly, a labourer in Syria is a living specimen of the curse brought upon mankind by the disobedience of Adam—" *He earns his daily bread by the sweat of his brow.*" Every day, save on fasts and festivals, his toil never ceases. At the commencement of the year, his first and most laborious occupation is that of rearing silk-worms, of which I shall now proceed to give a description.



## CHAPTER XIX.

## THE OCCUPATIONS OF THE PEOPLE.

It is early in spring. The snow that last week lay ankle deep in the plains and valleys of Mount Lebanon, has rapidly dissolved under the genial heat of the April sun. Storms that wildly raged along the sea-girt coast, outriders of Æolus, as he swept by in his hurricane-car, drawn by equinoctial gales; these have been lulled into repose, and the turbulent billows of the deep have forgotten their rough playmate, and are hushed into tranquillity. The winter garb of the forest is fast being set aside; the waters of the river flow pleasantly in the warm glow of sunshine; feathered songsters are tuning up against the great spring jubilee; the linnet and the bulbul now call to mind snatches of sweet carols many months forgotten; nature awakes to the bright morning of the year; with light heart the bee sucks from early opening flowers; with the passing song, the peasant trudges forward to his daily labour; oxen are yoked to the plough; the earth—drunk with excessive moisture—yields readily to the deep furrows made by the friendly implement; long hidden seeds are turned up to the light of day, and brought forth from nature's store-house to supply the wants of the hungry feathered multitude; grass springs up almost perceptibly beneath our feet; the swallow has returned from his distant

journeyings, and brought with him a retinue of gaily dressed butterflies. The sun grows warmer from day to day; the sky remains clear and cloudless; the first week of April has fled on the rapid wings of time, and we are fairly launched into all the delights of an incomparable Syrian spring—hie we forth early on the morrow to breathe the pure untainted air—to revel in the sweet odours wafted around us from countless flowers—to watch the master-touch of that great and beneficent Creator, who has left no work unfinished. Manifold indeed are His works, and in wisdom has He made them all.

The morrow has come, we are up and abroad before the sun has cast his first mantle of light over the pleasant waters of the deep blue sea. We saunter into one of the many white mulberry plantations that surround us on every side, and observe that the leafless boughs are only just putting forth their tender spring buds: yet there is an unusual commotion amongst the rearers of the silkworm—whole families, men, women, and children, are variously employed; the earth round the roots of the mulberry trees is being hoed up; some are planting young shoots, others busy in the kitchen gardens; whilst, to the European eye, a few appear as though engaged in a mysterious occupation. They seem as if their arms were an inconvenience to them, or, perhaps what is more of a simile, as though they were all afflicted with boils or eruptions under their arms, which preclude the possibility of using them without intense pain and difficulty. The singular attitude of these people, as they move about like so many brood-hens with anxiously expanded wings, once attracted the attention of an English medical officer, who assured me, with great alarm depicted in his countenance, that tumours under

the arm-pits are certain indications of the plague, and he immediately recommended our instant departure from the neighbourhood; whilst uncertain what course to pursue, one of the men thrust his hand into his bosom, and extracted the immediate cause of my friend's alarm; this proved to be a small bag of silk-worm eggs, and as this remainder of his stock has been late in hatching, the peasant resorted to artificial means, and the heat of his body is usually productive of beneficial effects. However, in some parts of Syria the eggs are deposited in moderately warm rooms, which speedily bring forth the embryo worm. Wonderful to say, these eggs, which have been suspended in linen bags throughout the whole year; during the heat of summer, the mild autumn, and the cold of winter—on which temperature has produced no effect—now that the right season has arrived, issue forth from the diminutive eggs, just as the mulberry first puts forth its delicate foliage, so well adapted to the weak state of the *microscopic worm*. Insects now creep round the bag that had confined them as eggs, and the peasant, who has been anxiously watching them for the last week, welcomes their appearance with infinite satisfaction, as sure harbingers of spring; and, as on the produce of the silk season, the fellah and his family depend in a great measure for their maintenance, the different processes are watched by them with great anxiety. Now let us attend from day to day, and watch the progress of these tiny millions as they advance in growth, and finally spin round themselves that marvellous small store-house of silk, commonly designated as the cocoon.

The first steps taken by the peasants after the eggs are hatched, is to place some of the minute worms in the centre of small circular baskets, which have been

carefully cemented over with cow-dung, and left in a sunny spot till completely dry ; this precaution is indispensable, because the worms are so diminutive that, however closely wrought may be the workmanship of the basket, they would inevitably fall through, and be destroyed or lost. The reason also for having the cow-dung is, that the cow is held in great esteem amongst most Oriental silk-worm breeders ; and a superstitious idea prevails, that this animal has a sacred charm, and they therefore imagine that by covering the baskets with cow-dung, it will have some power over the worms. In this primitive condition, a handful of the tender leaves of the mulberry is plucked, and cut up similarly to tobacco, and then sprinkled over the young brood. This process is repeated twice daily, and suffices for the food of numerous caterpillars during the first days of their existence. Their growth is very rapid, and their appetite ravenous ; and though tended each day with the utmost solicitude, it is by no means certain that one-half of the immense numbers contained in these baskets will arrive at perfection. Hundreds are trodden to death by their companions ; scores of brave young worms perish beneath the weight of some slender mulberry twig, the size of which, though small indeed, is, in comparison to them, like a huge tree ; besides these calamities, the worms are entirely at the mercy of the weather. In some parts of Syria, nature takes a freak into her head, and in the midst of sunshine and warmth, down comes a tremendous hail-stone shower or snow storm—then farewell to the worms and the poor peasant's prospects ; his only chance is, to send immediately to the mountain plantations, whose colder climate has retarded the hatching of the egg, and here, at great expense purchase a second supply of "silk-worm seed,"

(as it is technically called by us), and then the crop is entirely artificial, for the leaves have attained too coarse a texture, and the peasant is compelled to chop them up into minute particles before he durst administer them to the feeble and delicate insects. There are two other enemies from which the insect has to be guarded: during its first week's growth, it is extremely liable to be beset by red ants; and during the spinning, or last week of its existence as a worm, the swallow and the sparrow think it a delicacy wherewith to feed their newly hatched progeny, and great havoc is sometimes committed by these swift-winged depredators. Yet, notwithstanding all these drawbacks, so careful are the peasants, that every precaution has been taken long before the season arrives, to guard against any and all of these foes; and it may be accurately observed, that bad crops and unlucky seasons are the exceptions to a general rule. One year with another, he generally obtains, within a few drachmas, the quantity of silk he has reckoned upon, and he is usually pretty sure as to the amount of money he hopes to gain, as this has most commonly been agreed upon many months past, and the peasant has already received some portion of the fixed valuation in advance.

The first week of our watching has expired; the worms have increased. These little creatures, which occupied but a very small spot in the centre of the baskets, have now become so bulky, that they can no longer find space sufficient to crawl about without destruction to each other; consequently they have now to be removed to the *hoosse*, or cottages, erected purposely for their rearing, and they are no sooner placed here than the laborious part of the peasants' business commences. Heretofore his wife and children have



chiefly occupied themselves in supplying the frugal wants of the colony of young insects, and they had nothing else to do but to strip the smaller branches and twigs of the tender leaves; now, however, the worms, which are growing and thriving, require five times as much attention and food as before, consequently, the good man of the house and his son (if he has one), take the responsibility upon their shoulders the moment the worms become inmates of the hoosse, where they are generally installed with much ceremony; the priest repeats a benediction, and sprinkles holy water where the worms are to be placed.

We will follow the silk cultivator and his family, as they carry the small baskets containing the worms into the hoosse, which is a large hut with a peat roof; the walls are composed of reeds, platted like mats, with small partitions on every side. The building, which has been newly done up, is daily inspected, to prevent birds from taking up their abode amongst the straw and rushes of which it is composed; the interior of the kohs is fitted up with shelves, formed with canes, on which are laid closely-worked long and narrow mats, woven of reeds. These extend round three sides of the nurseries, and are placed one above another, with an intervening space between each shelf of about twenty inches. On these mats a thick layer of mulberry leaves is laid among the insects; the baskets containing the worms are moved carefully on the mats, instinct leading them to the freshest leaves; meanwhile, the peasant and his family are busily repeating prayers for a blessing on their undertakings, at the same time mixing the grossest and most absurd superstitions with their simple prayers. Pieces of red cloth rags, or other dazzling colors, together with a shell of a hen's egg, ornamented

with a red silk tassel and blue beads, are attached to the poles that support the hoosse, and every other imaginable part of the building where they are likely to meet the eye and attract attention. This is to divert the stranger from allowing his thoughts to be wholly occupied with the worms, or from gazing on them uninterruptedly : such an offence would be sure to be productive of the "*evil eye*." Indeed so great is the superstition of these poor ignorant peasants, and their dread of the baneful influence of this imaginary being, that they seldom have a child, cattle, or possess cocks and hens, or even trees upon which they place any value, without affixing to them a bunch of coloured rags, with a blue ring made of common glass, for say they, "those that have such things will be influenced by the venom of envy; and the venom of envy shooting out of the eyes will blight the object of our desire, as lightning blasts the tree." So much for this absurd and ridiculous notion. Another formula gone through, is the tying small skeins of last year's silk in various positions over the silkworms; this is to excite them to industry, and to shame such as are slothful, by shewing them the remnants of the riches and skill of their ancestors.

We have seen the silkworms duly installed in the hoosse, and retire to the music of their active mastication of the leaves, to return again on the morrow and see how things thrive.

To the surprise of my European friend, on entering the hoosse on the morrow, he found all solemn silence; on examining the shelves, he thought that the worms were all dead and gone. While he was regretting the heavy loss which would fall upon the cultivators, I smiled at his ignorance, and assured him that the worms were never more healthy than at the present moment,

(the peasant adding in a whisper), "*they are all good Christians of the Greek faith, and are keeping a three days' rigid fast.*" And this is firmly believed by him and his family, and is the prevalent notion in Syria. At such periods as the present, when the worms are in a state of torpor, owing to their rapid growth, which compels them at certain intervals to disembararrass themselves of the tight old skin, which being too small gradually bursts, and a fresh skin is formed, suitable to the increased size of the insect. At such periods the natives, from the highest to the lowest, priest and laymen, acknowledge the worms to be keeping a *Soame*, the Arabic term for fasts.

The third morning after our last visit we call again, and find the newly clad worms rapidly awaking to the sense of a keen appetite, glistening and shining like bridesmaids in their beautiful new white satin costumes. This process of shedding the skin, is evidently attended with danger to the silk-worm, if we may be permitted to judge from the number that have died under the process, whilst others, though surviving, have been so disfigured as to be rendered entirely useless. The peasant and his family are occupied collecting the dead and the maimed before feeding the hungry survivors; this finished, he arms himself with a sharp sickle; henceforth the leaves are no more gathered by the hands—trees are marked out in regular rotation—the smaller branches are cut off, which are then carried by the woman and children to a clean swept place in front of the hoosse; the leaves, and even smaller twigs, are speedily separated from the branches, and sprinkled plentifully over the worms; the branches are collected up on one side, and left to dry for future use as fuel; thus, whilst the foliage of the mulberry nourishes and

maintains life in the silk-worm, the branches are used to light the fire which suffocates the poor creatures when they have formed the cocoon, and assumed the chrysalis state. After this first *soame*, or fast, the worms grow very rapidly; in about a fortnight afterwards, they undergo the second fast—they are now, however, much stronger, and better able to resist the casting of their skins; so much so, that scarcely one dies under the operation. On recovering from the second *soame*, they eat prodigiously, and grow very rapidly. The peasant is compelled to cut the branches off the mulberry three times a day, in lieu of once, as heretofore, and the worms feast without intermission, morning, noon and night; at length, in about eight weeks from the time they were hatched, their existence as worms is rapidly drawing to a close. What was at first barely the size of a grain of fine gunpowder, is now between three and four inches long, sleek and fat, and for all the world looking like a young roasting lamb of Lilliputian breed, ready trussed up for cooking.

All the mulberry trees in the plantation, with the exception of some six or a dozen, present the lamentable spectacle of so many boughless stems; whilst nature around is profuse in luxuriance, and the wild convolvulus, as though compassionating the sad condition of the mulberry, twists its friendly leaves around, and decks it with gaudy blossoms of the early May morning. The peasant has been busy cutting down boughs of trees, etc.; these have been exposed to the sun, till all the leaves have withered and fallen to the ground. The worm which, by a wonderful instinct, has heretofore never strayed seven inches from where it was originally placed, now begins to evince symptoms of impatience, and roves about the edges of the shelves, or tries to



mount up the smooth and slippery canes that support the shelves. The peasant marking these indications, immediately places the dry twigs of thorn and bushes over the worms, and in a short time the whole colony rapidly mounts amongst these twigs, each choosing out for itself some favourable position, where it may with greater facility weave its costly and wonderful web. And now we stand silently, and watch the indefatigable little creature silently persevering in completing its own little storehouse, and what will prove to be its own little tomb. No machinery could be more exact than the movements of this small insect, as it carefully draws out of its mouth thread after thread, now moving with its head to the right, and carrying the almost invisible web down to its tail, then turning its head in the opposite direction, apparently for the purpose of drawing the silk from where it had been fastened on one side, till it has carefully drawn it over its own head, and secured it with gummy saliva. We quit the worms at mid-day, when barely a thread of this wonderful substance is as yet visible; we return early the next day, and the cocoon is formed, but it is yet too tender to be touched. The peasant merely contents himself with observing the shape and color of these cocoons—setting much store on such as are of a yellow brown tinge, small, with a belt in the centre. Some of the cocoons are as white as snow, some yellow, some brown. The peasant now reports the condition of the silk-worms to his master, who immediately places his seal on the door of the hoosse.

When they are considered fit to reel off the silk, he has the old oven to put in repair, to inspect the basin on the top of this altar-shaped furnace, to erect the old wheel, which has laid on the dust-heap ever since last year—drive a nail in here—put a new spoke in there;



and when all is completed, and ready for immediate use, the peasant's wife goes early on the morning of the auspicious day, and carries in her hand a morsel of damp clay, this she flings against the door-post of the master's house, if it adheres, then luck will attend the season, if, on the contrary, it drops off, the silk will be unsaleable. This is not the last superstitious ceremony observed ; early that morning, about an hour after sunrise, the master of the plantation, followed by the peasant, and all his family, march in regular procession to the hoosse, the great man carrying under his arm a bundle of handkerchiefs, and other trifles, to distribute as presents amongst his followers ; these are duly distributed on reaching the sheds ; every one says a blessing on that day's undertaking, the door is unsealed, the people rush in, and rapidly empty the hoosse of the twigs and branches on which the cocoons have settled ; these are piled up outside of the door, the women and children spread mats on the ground ; here seated, they detach the cocoons from the twigs, and the peasants, as the mats get overloaded, gather the cocoons into a goodly-sized basket ; by nightfall this operation has been concluded ; they then separate from the mass some two or three hundred of the very best cocoons, which are set aside to breed from. Next day, the first streak of dawn has barely lit up the East, before the busy peasants are up and doing. "The cocoon cleaners" are occupied in picking them ; that is, detaching from the hard shell the soft downy substance, which afterwards constitutes what is termed the rough silk. The peasant, meanwhile, has lit the furnace ; the water in the boiler is wrought to a proper temperature for reeling the silk. An old man busies himself in bringing bundles of faggots from the large pile of mulberry branches, with which to keep

the fire alive. Baskets of picked cocoons are placed beside the peasant who, seated on a stool, chooses from these a dozen or fourteen at a time, while a man or a boy turns the handle of the large wheel; the cocoons are thrown into the warm water, and well whipped with switches, till the whole surface becomes frothy, and the threads of the cocoons begin to detach themselves. Seizing these, the peasant skilfully draws them up, gradually using more strength, till he has sufficient length of thread to fasten to a peg in the wheel. The party at the wheel commences turning with all his force; the wheel goes round rapidly; the peasant is ever on the watch, knotting broken threads, supplying the place of empty shells by fresh cocoons, or screaming to his attendant for more fire or more water. So passes the day. Evening arrives, and there is a large heap of empty cocoons, in which, however, the dead worms still remain; and on the wheel, which was bare in the morning, there is a fine thick golden-looking skein of of silk, weighing some four or five pounds. This primitive style of reeling is of course detrimental to the quality of the silk, and is a frightfully slow method compared to European factories, which I have visited. When the peasant discovers that he has more cocoons than he can possibly reel off within a given time, he stifles them by exposing them to great heat, a process by which the quantity of silk they yield is greatly diminished; but as the cocoon fly, *i.e.*, the moth, comes out within three weeks, this stifling is indispensable, as the cocoon (except for rough silk) is wholly unfit for use when once it has been perforated by the moth.

About two weeks have passed since first the cocoon commenced to be reeled; the silk is now ready for the market, and is hanging out in golden festoons to dry

thoroughly before it is packed. The old baskets are once again brought into play, but they are this time all alive with fluttering white velvet-like moths; they never fly. Their enjoyment of life is very brief indeed; the male moth dies within twenty hours of its birth; the female is then placed on fine linen rags, where, in the course of the day it will deposit from 100 to 500 eggs, which are left in the air for a short time, and then put into linen bags and hung from the beam in the centre of the house, or sent to the mountain to await another year. The silk season ends just as the heat of June sets in.

Having watched the whole process of the fellah throughout the silk season, we will continue to follow him to the close of the year. The silk being stored away, and provision made for the future brood of worms, I will call my reader's attention to the wheat harvest. The labors of the peasantry will now be of a severer nature than hitherto; he has to toil under the scorching rays of the sun, whose beams at least in some parts of Syria and Palestine, are far more powerful than those ever endured by English reapers; consequently the fellah is compelled to desist from his occupation from mid-day till about two o'clock in the afternoon. During this portion of the day, scarcely a breath of air stirs, not a leaf is ruffled; even the many colored and beautiful butterflies lazily flutter from flower to flower seeking shade beneath the petals of the Damascene rose; all is perfectly still, and the peasants take their wonted siesta. However great may be the inconvenience of the intense heat, yet it is wholly balanced by the benefits which accrue from the excellent climate with which this country is blest. The farmer in Syria has no cause of apprehension from sudden storms or showers, so that

the harvest is gathered in, receiving no injury from changes of weather, to which it is subject in less genial latitudes. The corn being reaped by the fellahs, the damsels, even as in the time of Ruth, follow, gathering the ears and binding them in sheaves; after leaving them for a short time to dry, they are carried to a part of the field called *baiedar*, which has been levelled and swept clear to receive them. A rude machine, constructed of oaken planks with stones fixed in holes drilled on the under side, is placed on the now scattered sheaves; on this a youth sits or stands to drive the oxen round and round, which have been harnessed to it. This process separates the grain from the husk; it has next to be winnowed, and for this purpose is collected in heaps; the corn, by means of a wooden shovel, is thrown up in the air, when the delightful and cool breezes of evening waft the chaff to the winds. The reaping, threshing, and winnowing, being now completed, the wheat intended for domestic consumption, is stored in wells, constructed expressly for this purpose, whilst that which is for agricultural uses, is placed in enormous jars, of from five to fifteen feet in height, and of proportionate diameter.

The peasant now receives from his master the portion due to him from the harvest; he then commences making one half of what he obtains into *borghol*. The weather is most favourable for this process, as it requires fine sunny days, and during the night the wheat is covered with sheets to protect it from the dew, which is very heavy in the East. The grain is first washed and boiled, when it is exposed for several days to dry on mats, before carrying it to the mill, where it is ground and thus converted into *borghol*. Of this there are two kinds, viz., coarse and fine; this latter serves simply as

a substitute for rice, and is called *ruzz-mufalfal*, whilst the other is used in *kubbas*, that favorite dish to which I have before alluded. The harvest is now over, and the vineyards in the surrounding mountains present a rich and beautiful sight; the bright and luscious clusters of black and white grapes lie in profusion along the ground, for in Syria the vines are suffered to trail on the earth, and I am persuaded that were they trained as in the Rhenish vineyards, they would yield a more abundant crop.

At this season of the year, the scene which is now presented is both picturesque, lovely, and interesting. Beneath a sky pure and bright, amidst the luxuriant and straggling vines, the damsels of Lebanon are busily occupied collecting the grapes. With what ease and elegance they move! Their graceful forms are shewn to full advantage in their loose and flowing vesture the brilliant and well-selected shades of which contrast beautifully with surrounding nature. Some are bringing baskets to be filled, whilst others are cutting the grapes and placing them in these panniers. The sun now begins to shed a deep red on the face of the western horizon, this is the signal to return home; each one takes her basket, puts it on her head, or loads her donkey, and the gay cavalcade moves homewards, singing some plaintive ditty; and thus ends a day which I know many of my fair Western readers would be not a little interested to witness. On the following day, those which are not required by the villagers for their own wines, arraki or raisins, are carried to the market where they are sold. Even in the vineyards there remains enough to satisfy the weary traveller as he passes by, and to supply the feathered tribes, and the bees, that therefrom gather an abundant store of rich



honey, either for hives, or, flying to far distant woods and meadows, make for themselves a secret nest amidst the fragrant herbs ; however, these hidden stores are soon tracked out and added to the simple repasts of our peasantry. Scarcely is the vintage over, when the olive plantations require attention. This is one of the most celebrated as well as useful of all trees. The fruit is beaten from the tree in the same way as walnuts in England are thrashed in a green or unripe state, it is steeped in an alkaline ley, and then pickled in salt and water, and that it is much esteemed when thus preserved is well known. To procure the oil, the nearly ripe fruit is bruised by moderate pressure in a mill, when the oil flows out. This valuable article is used in almost every Syrian culinary preparation, and it is also applied for many medicinal purposes. Thus with the olive, meet emblem of peace, end the bright beams of this year's sun. Winter comes on with rapid strides ; the boughs so lately loaded with leaves, flowers, and lastly, with fruits, are daily losing their beautiful foliage ; and chilling autumnal breezes coldly whisper through the leafless branches, and Lebanon grows dark till the pale snow covers its top, and reflects the last dying rays of the sun. The peasantry now gather their supplies of fuel, which the relentless winds tear from the trees, scattering the earth with fragments of boughs, which however prove most acceptable to those who are in search of wood. And now the fellah and his cheerful family being furnished with fruits of all kinds, wine, honey, poultry and firing, and the numerous other *et ceteras* necessary to a Syrian household, fear nought for winds or storms ; nor are his cattle forgotten, his cow and treasured mare are both furnished with provender, much of which has been made from the refuse left by the silkworm of the

mulberry leaves, the centre part of which they could not devour; these having been collected were made into stacks ready for winter. During the autumn, the cattle derive much nourishment from the second crop which sprouts from the despoiled mulberry trees. The fellah's wants being thus well supplied, he fails not to acknowledge the blessing which he possesses, and exclaims, *El-Hham'do li-llah !*" God be praised.

The resources of Syria are inexhaustible if only properly developed. The trade in wine may rival that of Spain, Portugal, or France; the grapes are beautiful, and if they were only properly selected, and proper means taken to secure a good wine in this country, neither in Europe or Asia, is there greater facility for establishing an extensive and lucrative trade in this one department than in Syria and Palestine? The fruits are delicious, and those grown in the open air and without any trouble, rival in flavour, quality, and quantity, those of any other country, where the greatest pains are taken and great expense incurred to accomplish this. Then, again, the articles of tobacco, wheat, wool, etc., and innumerable other articles; madder root, the beautiful dyes of Syria (the Tyrian dye is not known now); one and all may, if properly cultivated and brought into the English market, rival its imports from all other parts of the world. The immense plains could, with very little outlay or labour, give us wheat and wool, indeed, supply all the world; and Syria will, I hope, yet, at no remote period, become the granary of the west.

The white wool of Scripture was up to a late period partially grown in the country around the Euphrates; and, as is suggested by Dr. Thompson in the articles already adverted to in the Colonial and Asiatic Magazine,

when an improved breed of sheep from English colonies, Spain, etc., shall be introduced into Syria, we may expect to supply with its resources the markets now chiefly furnished with wool from America, Australia, Germany, etc.

## CHAPTER XX.

THE COMPARATIVE INFLUENCES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC  
AND PROTESTANT FAITHS IN SYRIA.

THERE is perhaps no country in the world which so much invites the attention of the Propaganda of Rome as Syria and the Holy Land. To possess a leading influence in its destinies, has ever been the ambition of the Pope. What could have been more iniquitous than the absurd pretensions of the Roman Catholics in the Jerusalem question? It may be necessary to go back a little and to acquaint the reader that France has for many years claimed a sort of protection over the Romish Churches in Syria, and in periods of commotion in Mount Lebanon has exhibited the French colours from the convents, whilst all the appearance of state protection from the propaganda has been kept up of late years, as must be well known in Europe. Thus a perpetual excitement is created in Mount Lebanon, the Roman Catholics looking to France, the Greeks to Russia, and the Druses to England. All this must be naturally displeasing to the Turkish government, and destructive to the country itself, whilst the agents of each of these parties are edging them on to perpetual outbreaks, and most disgraceful scenes are continually occurring at Jerusalem, even around the sepulchre of our blessed Lord; so that there is presented to Christendom the melan-

choly spectacle, of Turkish soldiers called in to prevent Christians massacring one another. . To increase the confusion, the last French ambassador at the Porte, M. Lavalette, has demanded a renewal and ratification of some privileges stated to be the substance of an old treaty with France, and so far succeeded as to obtain a promise from the ex-minister, Reschid Pacha, to comply with his wishes. Pending the negociation, however, the French minister being absent for a time, Russia went to work and had this promise set aside. His excellency M. Lavalette, returning and finding this, prepared to stand to his colours, and brought the Charlemagne man-of-war to sustain his demand. The grand vizier was called upon for an explanation, and as he could not defend his conduct, was dismissed from office, and the question thus remained in abeyance for months, but has now again been mooted. France has got a renewal of the original privilege, whilst Russia continues obstinately to oppose these concessions. The question is thus still at issue, and it is difficult to say how, when, or where it will end, unless England, as the only power best suited to do so, mediate between such conflicting parties. At least such is my humble opinion. The Holy Sepulchre once exclusively in the possession of the Roman Catholics would indeed be a bright gem in the diadem of the Romish Church, the acme of their ambition, and a keystone to the hearts and affections of every Christian inhabitant in Syria; but though they have as yet failed in this, they have many other strongholds and fastnesses in the land. Look at their convents at Carmel, Jaffa, Ramlah, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Sidon, Beyrout, Acre, Damascus, and Aleppo, and which are daily increasing. In these, and many other towns, they are the chief point of attraction



to the weary wayfarers; to these they flock for rest and for sustenance—to these the sick betake themselves for medical advice and medicine—and all is afforded them gratuitously. They have also schools for the instruction of children in Arabic, Italian, and French; and though many poor members of the Greek Church would gladly abstain from sending their children to be under the tuition of the priests, did any other opportunity offer itself for their education, still, in many instances, they have now no alternative if at least they desire that their children should be instructed in the European languages. At the present day, the sea-coast towns of Syria are rising into such great importance from the rapidly increasing commerce with Great Britain and America, that to be possessed of a smattering of foreign languages is a source of revenue to the rising generation of Syria; hence, all are desirous of obtaining this knowledge, and for the accomplishment of their desire, there is no choice left but to attend the Roman Catholic schools.

There is, as I have already stated, an innate enmity between the Greeks and Latins in Syria—a deadly strife in a doctrinal point of view; still the young Syrians of the Greek persuasion, and even Moslems who, from self-interest, are prompted to attend daily to these Romish schools, are also compelled to submit to their rules; and the course of instruction there consists almost exclusively of books and lessons well adapted to impress upon the young imagination the doctrines and observances of that Church. What follows from this intercourse? The teacher begins to plot against the pupil; he softens down difficulties; he wins confidence by kind words, and occasionally by small gifts, whilst a strict endeavour is made to mix up with these studies as

much pleasure and amusement as is admissible with the drier pursuits of knowledge. These and a hundred other methods are adopted by the Roman Catholic priests to gain over the esteem and regard of the pupils ; and as a natural result, the child, perhaps innately of an affectionate disposition, feels an impulse to be grateful—gratitude warms into friendship—friendship ripens into attachment ; and then the battle is lost and won ; the child is only nominally a Greek—in principle and at heart a Romanist. The parents and friends may be long in discovering the painful truths of the case (if ever they arrive at the knowledge), for in exact proportion as the child becomes imbued with his teacher's notions, so does he imbibe that unchristian spirit of concealment and deception which it is the great aim of his preceptors that he should be possessed of ; and having reached this point, as he grows in years so he grows deeper in cunning and becomes a powerful instrument in the hands of his instructors, “a wolf in sheep's clothing,” turned loose among the flock of his unsuspecting brethren, and whilst a strict adherer to the outward observances of the Greek Church, is a very Jesuit at heart, working out with secret, but almost certain success, the utter slavery of all those that fall into his meshes. This is a present existing evil in Syria—a growing danger—a picture of truth not at all overdrawn. This is the “wild beast” of the present day in Lebanon which is “passing by and treading down the humble and unsupported thistle.”

Hospitality is the prevailing feature of the East ; it is a precept and practice handed down from generation to generation since the time of the patriarchs. Abraham, when he unconsciously received and waited upon the three heavenly messengers, was doing exactly what

is practised by the wild Arabs of the desert to this very day. "*Baëtic baetuc*" (my house is your house) is, with a very few exceptions, the maxim in the heart of every inhabitant of Syria, the more-refined citizens of Damascus and Aleppo placing the best rooms in their houses at the disposal of the stranger, as well as their horses, their servants, the best fruits of their gardens, and even themselves. All is cheerfully given up to their guests, and that man is a black sheep of the flock who is wanting in courtesy to the stranger, be he Christian, Moslem, or idolater, rich or poor.

The poor peasant in his lowly hut in the village, and the Arab in his tent, will gladly share his frugal repast with the friendless stranger, and allot him a corner of his own cushion and portion of his own bed-covering, if he have nothing better to offer. In fact, the latter will not allow a stranger to pass without entering his tent-door and tasting the bread and salt of hospitality. A man without hospitality is looked upon as worthless and unnatural, but a people without hospitality—the idea is too monstrous for an oriental to conceive.

The Latin convent on Mount Carmel has a widespread fame in the East. The Hadgi from the far-distant shores of India, whom chance or speculation has brought from Mecca into Syria, has oftentimes been refreshed, and rested under the shadow of these its hospitable walls, and he naturally returns to his friends and his country full of the good deeds and the kindness of the monks of the great *daher* (convent) of *Mar Elias*. Another perhaps has been sick nigh unto death, and in his sickness was nursed, kindly waited upon, restored to health, and then sent forth with a blessing, by the *Hakims* of this convent. What follows? The virtues and charities of these Catholic brethren

are ever afterwards the theme of his daily conversation. Again—a pilgrim, penniless and starving, has received food and raiment, with a small sum of money to carry him on his way home, from the Carmelite friars. This pilgrim, through after-life, cherishes a thankful gratitude towards his timely benefactors; and this, to a greater or less extent, is the case with all the minor convents and monasteries in Syria.

Now while the Roman Catholics have their convents, the Greeks and Armenians their monasteries; while the Druses, Maronites, and Arabs, have a corner in their humble dwellings, and a crust and a sup for the penniless pilgrim and the weary wayfarer; yet alas! not even in Beyrout can the English boast of ever so mean an establishment for the exercises of charity—charity, that golden rule, laid down by Him whom they profess to look to as their only Saviour and Redeemer, as the great Pattern and Example of their lives. When I reflect upon the enormous sums spent in sending fleets to fill Syria with bloodshed and misery, to the ruin of many of my unfortunate countrymen, I must confess my surprise is turned into indignation.

Amongst the fraternity constituting the monks of the various convents, there is always one or more somewhat skilled in the art of healing; and generally attached to these establishments, as in the instance of the convent on Mount Carmel, is a dispensary well stocked with drugs, and with the newest and best medicines recognized and used by physicians. In some few of the principal towns in Syria there are resident European doctors, principally Italians and Frenchmen, with a sprinkling of Germans and Poles, and one or two Americans. With the exception of the last-mentioned,

they are mostly in the pay of the Turkish government, and are either connected with the quarantine establishments, attached to the troops, or are body physicians to the Pacha. Relative to these, however, I may quote what Dr. Thompson, who was for some time at Damascus on a medical mission, and who was extremely beloved and esteemed by the natives there, states, viz., "That on one occasion he was requested by the seraskier or commander of the forces for Arabia, to perform an important operation on a soldier, as the ordinary medical staff were not able or willing to do it. In the course of the operation, the medical staff one and all failed in their aid, and some of them even fainted, and the writer had to rely on his own presence of mind, and unaided to terminate the operation. Imagine an epidemic in a hospital under such surveillance; the mortality is frightful even under ordinary circumstances. In acute cases, and in serious surgical cases, there is little or no chance for a successful result; and the soldiers and sailors seldom resort to the doctor if they can avoid it. The European renegades in the service are very little better, with a few exceptions. The monks that practise medicine as a profession have a very fair knowledge of simples, and compound their own medicines, and employ a good many recent chemicals and modern ingredients in the European *Materia Medica*; but their knowledge of acute disease is necessarily limited."

The natives, in the hour of sickness, have first of all recourse to simple herbal remedies, which have been handed down through many generations, and are chiefly held in estimation by the old people of the villages. When these remedies are found to fail, then, and oftentimes only at the eleventh hour, they bethink them of



the Franks inhabiting some convent in the neighbourhood ; and as all Franks are supposed to be physicians by birth, recourse is had to their healing art in preference to Italian or other quack medical professors, who are harsh in their treatment of the sick, unconscionable as to charges, and in any real case of difficulty seldom, if ever, successful. The monks are always ready and willing to avail themselves of any such opportunity of displaying their skill and charity, and it requires no second invitation before one or more of them are at the threshold of the sick man's house, and a few minutes finds them busily occupied about the cure, if it be practicable. In many instances, the patient is only suffering from severe constipation, or it may be a severe attack of ague ; and in these cases a quick and almost miraculous cure is soon effected. That it should be considered a miracle or an interposition of Divine Providence, brought about by the prayers and benedictions of the holy friars, is the main object they have in view, hence no opportunity is lost on the first arrival of the priestly doctors to impress upon the minds of the relatives and friends in secret the almost certainty of the patient's demise unless a special interposition be made by them on his behalf. If this does not ultimately lead to the conversion of the household, it shakes them in their own creed, engenders confidence towards their benefactors, and leaves a grateful impression behind for many gratuitous charities rendered. The least return they can then make, is to comply with the oft-urged request of the monks to send their children to be educated at the convent school.

Luckily for the credit of Great Britain she sends few charlatans from her colleges, and an English or American quack is a thing heretofore unheard of in Syria, whereas

charlatans of all other nations have been superabundant. An English doctor possesses an unsullied reputation in Syria. He is looked upon in the same light as an English gun, or an English watch—a thing that can only be manufactured or brought to perfection in England. Hence, if the report be spread that an English Hakim, or even an Englishman of any denomination, be travelling in the neighbourhood, the halt, and lame, and blind, and otherwise ailing of all the surrounding villages will congregate near to where his tent may be pitched, and pester him incessantly for remedies, if it be only a little white sugar weighed out by his skilful hands, to be used in cases of ophthalmia. Every sect, and even Mahommedan ladies, came and consulted Dr. Thompson, and received him at their own houses unveiled. The judicious physician is treated in the light of a gifted individual; he is looked upon as having the power of life and death in his hands: in the sick-room he is courted and treated with the greatest deference and respect; and even whilst passing in the streets, the occupants rise to salute him. It is not uncommon for him to find himself impeded in his progress by the prostration of the female members of the family to kiss his garments, even his shoes. This has occurred repeatedly, to my knowledge, in Damascus; and the doctor was also appealed to in private matters as an umpire, and for his advice in domestic and personal affairs.

I may also here relate an incident in my own life, in support of the influence which a Hakim can obtain over the prejudices of Eastern people. During my last visit to Constantinople, whilst visiting at the house of a Pacha, His Excellency, in the course of conversation, hinted to me, that the rumour of my medical

studies in Europe had reached him; and after a little introductory preamble, he begged of me to see his wife, who had been confined to her bed for some days. I can hardly describe my astonishment at such a request coming from such a quarter; however, I expressed my readiness to do all in my humble power to alleviate the sufferings of the invalid. I was accordingly conducted by a eunuch through a perfect maze of dark and mysterious passages (coughing all the way, as is the fashion, to give notice of the approach of a male for the females to veil themselves) to the bed-chamber of the sick lady, whom I found reclining upon a mattress, laid upon a carpet on the floor. It being announced to her, that the Hakim Bashi was at hand, an attendant, old Dudu, came forward, and our interview commenced.

After a short conversation, in which she made many anxious inquiries relative to the Frank country and the English ladies, about whom I found she had very absurd notions, we came to the real object of my visit. I asked where the pain lay, and it will cause my readers to smile when I state her reply. She told me that I must cast her nativity according to Eastern customs, and thus discover the seat of pain myself. I told her that the system of medicine which I had learnt in England did not admit of such practices, and went on to shew her the utter fallacy of such doings. She answered me, that her own doctor in Circassia formally adopted this plan, and that, after ascertaining the star under which she was born, appropriate verses from the Koran were written upon three slips of paper: one was put in water, which she afterwards drunk; one was burnt with perfumes to drive evil spirits from the room; and the third was placed upon the affected part. After some little difficulty I discovered the seat of her

malady, and that she was suffering under a tumour. I then felt her pulse, and requested her to shew me her tongue. Here another difficulty arose, as she could not shew me her tongue without unveiling; but the old lady who stood by told her that the Prophet allowed it before the Hakim and Priest, at the same time quoting verses from the Koran in assertion of what she stated. This had the desired effect; and on her removing her veil, I was perfectly dazzled with the intense sweetness and beauty of her face. She was a Circassian, one of the fairest of her race, and had just arrived at Constantinople. After some trouble she permitted me to inspect the part affected; on beholding it, some lectures delivered by my revered Mentor, Mr. Phillips, and also by Mr. Fergusson, immediately recurred to my mind. In the lectures they said, that incision with the knife was the only remedy in such cases. After two days I ventured to break this to my trembling patient, much to her terror; but on my assuring her that I would remove it without her being sensible to pain, she at last consented, and I successfully performed the operation, putting her under the effects of chloroform, which appeared to the bystanders pure magic. They had heard tell of such things from the Arabian Nights, but could hardly believe their senses when actually beheld by themselves in the present day.

I have already endeavoured to shew in how many various ways the Latins possess superior opportunities, and are in a superior position to the Greeks, in having greater facilities daily afforded them as far as regards the work of conversion; but there is yet another great source of privilege to them, and one which holds out many tempting inducements to the heavily-taxed peasantry to embrace at once, and without any further

hesitation, the Roman Catholic faith. This decoy is the privilege exercised by the consular authorities, and even by the very priests themselves, of protecting from outrage or insult every one who has embraced their religion, and who gives evidence of the sincerity of their intentions by regular attendance at mass, and by the rigid observance of high-days and holy-days, feasts and fasts. They also give them employment, and they become, *de facto*, protected by the French government, their taxes are light in comparison with those levied on their fellow-countrymen, and they are entirely exempted from that grinding system so commonly practised and played off upon the peasantry by the soldiery and underlings of government—a class of individuals that are a perfect bane to the Ottoman empire.

Before concluding these remarks, I must point out another glaring instance in which the Latins have gained a decided ascendancy over the Greeks in the East. I allude to the establishment by the Sisters of Charity of a hospital at Beyrout, in which the first medical advice there procurable has been secured. Here the poor fever-stricken natives have every attention paid to their wants in the hour of sorrow and sickness; while, side by side, on neat iron-bedsteads covered with snowy linen, we stumble across the last sad remains of the French Roman Catholic sailor, and, in the next bed to his, the Protestant British tar. Both have been equally cared for, as far as bodily concerns go, but there has been a fearful distinction between the spiritual consolation of the two. The Frenchman has received daily—hourly visits from the nuns, who have spoken to him smilingly of heaven, and lighted death's dark pathway with the rays of cheerfulness. The Englishman, on the contrary, has felt himself friendless and solitary—no gentle lips have stooped



down to whisper comfort and holy counsellings to the quickly departing soul. The reason is, that there is not at present an English clergyman or an English doctor in Beyrout.

The Sisters of Charity, and their other kindred agencies in the East, are beneficial in their way. During seasons of sickness they are all in full requisition, and deserve their meed of praise. As to these religious ladies, whatever may be their proselytising propensities—we know, that where they chiefly confine themselves to their meek and humble calling, their indefatigable zeal and never-ceasing exertions at all seasons and at all hours, are greatly to be commended. The patients visited at their own houses retain a grateful sense of the patient attention shewn them in the hours of need and in seasons of epidemic, when in the East friends desert each other. The institutions under their control are remarkably well kept, and far more neatly and economically conducted than any hospitals or schools in England. The manner in which their internal economy and household arrangements are conducted and *efficiently* superintended is highly creditable to them.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE REMEDY.

FROM the earliest days of Christianity, the blessed truths of the Gospel were almost invariably accompanied by acts of mercy and love. At first these truths were impressed upon the memories of reckless and darkly ignorant multitudes by signs and wonders, well suited to the times and people; and miracles, resulting in immediate temporary benefit to the afflicted, were apt, though but faint, illustrations of the incalculable boon about to be conferred on the immortal souls of the believers and followers of our blessed Redeemer—the blind received their sight—the lame recovered the use of their limbs—the sick were healed—and even the dead were brought to life again. The early apostles were physicians both to the soul and body; and those that had faith but as a grain of mustard-seed went about doing good to the sick and the dying. These miracles were palpable and beyond the power of refutation; and as long as the necessity for something beyond the comprehension of man existed, such things were requisite to draw and fix the attention of ignorant and superstitious idolators; but as soon as the true faith had taken root, and the young sapling no longer required outward and visible props to secure it from those tempestuous hurricanes of persecution which, through so long a period, raged with hardly any intermission, then palpable

miracles ceased to be exercised on earth—the visible sign was removed—the word of command or the touch no longer possessed the healing virtue—but miracles of grace and mercy still continued to be performed, and they continue to this day the same, as palpably visible to the spiritually-minded man (who can distinguish the hand of God in every temporal blessing enjoyed by the true followers of Christ), as was the resurrection of Lazarus to those unbelieving Jews who were eye-witnesses to that marvellous demonstration of infinite power tempered with infinite mercy. In lieu of this power of performing miracles, or of witnessing them, men were endowed with a spirit of wisdom, which gradually developed itself in successive generations, and the sick and the dying—the maimed, the halt, and the blind, who had now no further hope of instantaneous or certain relief through miraculous gifts, resorted to the skill of physicians, men of more enlightened education than themselves, but in other respects their equals, co-partners of the joys and sorrows inherited in this world, and destined like themselves to terminate their earthly career in the grave. And these physicians, or at least some amongst them, laboured for the benefit of humanity.

At first, we may readily conceive that their resources were limited, and their primitive knowledge of medicines extremely scant, but the healing art never retrograded a single step. Of this we have abundant proof in the history of nations, as regards the advancement of this peculiar branch of science, though it is most true, that in countries such as, for instance, Arabia, which, in times past, was pre-eminent for its knowledge of medicinal drugs, and which may be said to have been the nursery of chemistry; this art has almost entirely disappeared,

whilst in the present day the medical profession may in Europe be said to have arrived nearly at its zenith; other sciences may have kept pace with it in their marvellous and beneficial discoveries, but none can so much claim the thankful gratitude of mankind in general. Health is universally acknowledged to be the most precious of all temporal blessings, and, consequently, the pillars that maintain and prop up health have a prior claim to all others; and that man must be blind indeed, both spiritually and bodily, who does not see and acknowledge in this boon to suffering humanity the invisible hand of the Almighty Benefactor, as clearly intelligent to the man of God now, as were then the words. "*Arise, take up thy bed and walk,*" to the hopeless palsied patient. In short, every cure and every relief afforded to the sick and dying, are so many miracles of mercy. A man meets with an accident—he is mortally wounded in battle—crushed by a railway accident—burnt in a fire—all but drowned in water—sick of a fatal malady lingering with vain hopes and vainer love of life—the marked victim of consumption—these all have their immediate and most excruciating tortures benumbed or alleviated by the skill of the physician; or, if there is hope of life, the whispering of that hope falls from their lips like precious balm of Gilead imbuing them with courage and patience to undergo suffering, for great beyond measure is the tenaciousness to life. If, on the other hand, the skilful practitioner believes his patient doomed, and pronounces the last verdict, still he can proclaim to him the sweet hope of mercy—mercy eternal and boundless—for the penitent sinner, and help him to collect his scattered thoughts from wandering to that world which he must now speedily leave; he may whisper to him that there is still time for hope,

and to hope for mercy, and he may assist him to spend these last precious moments in penitence and prayer.

What has long ceased to be a marvel amongst nations advanced in civilisation is still regarded in the light of a miracle by the untutored portion of the world. Those who have penetrated into the remotest, and least-known regions, have adduced evidence in support of this, and it is natural that a savage should regard with superstitious awe and reverence a man endowed by education with even such every-day attainments as would barely pass muster in England, France, or America, and it is as natural that this awe and reverence should gradually give place to affection and gratitude when, by the interposition of medical skill, the sick and suffering man experiences a speedy transition from suffering to the rapturous bliss of a state of convalescence,—and this transition brought about, too, by what, to him in his ignorance, appears a magical influence. His faith in that man's powers is so great, that, if he only drop a word in proper season, the untutored mind of the comparative savage has sufficient natural energy to grow inquisitive about what so materially regards himself, and he soon feels persuaded that one from whom he has already received such convincing proofs of disinterested kindness can never be capable of doing him an injury; and this leads him to reflect; and reflection is the first grand foundation-stone, which, when once firmly set, can readily be built upon, and become, with God's blessing, a house upon a rock. Throughout all ages since the foundation of the Christian faith, those missionaries who have penetrated into barbarous countries, have invariably found the great utility of being acquainted, however slightly, with a knowledge of medicines and their proper application. The very word *hakim* is a



passport to the Oriental heart and good-will. How else could Europeans, in the garb of monks, and furnished only with staff and wallet, have traversed those vast and unknown regions of China, Tartary, Thibet, etc., and have escaped scatheless to make known to the world their travels and adventures in lands and amongst people whose very name was a mystery to civilised Europe? That physicians are honoured by these people, and even in some instances gratefully remembered, is certain. This truth is placed beyond a doubt by the fact of a Chinese poet having celebrated the name, fame, and good deeds of a skilful European oculist in a lengthy poem, part of which was translated into English and published some few years since in London, taken, I believe, from the notes of the late Rev. Mr. Abeel, a distinguished American settled at Singapore. And it is owing to the fact of monks, professionally physicians, having been with impunity permitted to travel through unknown lands that Europeans are indebted to the introduction of the silkworm from China into their own country, an indefatigable monk having ingeniously contrived to convey the eggs, carefully packed in the hollow off his staff over thousands of miles, and through apparently insuperable dangers and difficulties from China to Turkey.

I have now, I hope, succeeded in proving to the reader the necessity that exists of incorporating the medical with the clerical profession in the persons of those good Christians, valiant soldiers of Christ, who are cheerfully willing to devote their lives and talents to the furtherance of the Gospel as missionaries in foreign parts; and I shall now endeavour to explain my views, hopes, and wishes, as connected more immediately with the spread of the Truth in Syria and

throughout the East. Many thousands of pounds have been already lavished upon futile attempts to convert the heathen, and many excellent Christians are now to be found in England ready with open hand to further a good cause; but as I never intend to participate in any worldly gain to be drawn directly or indirectly from what I am about to recommend to their serious attention and consideration, they must at least acquit me of any selfish motives, for my career in life is not in my own power, and though I have learnt to prize England and the many treasured friends and privileges I here possess most highly, yet, I cannot forget my mother country altogether, and trust and hope I may be able, at intervals, to revisit its sunny shore for a while, and during my absence from it my every thought shall be how best to promote the spiritual welfare of my beloved brethren there.

The plan I propose as best calculated to insure, within a few years, the happiest results to Syria, is as follows, viz :—

Firstly.—That a society be formed in England, composed of benevolent ladies and gentlemen, who shall have for their aim the establishment of a charitable hospital and schools at Beyrout, and that, for the furtherance of this object, subscription-lists be opened at some of the principal banking establishments all over Great Britain.

Secondly.—That the donations thus collected shall be paid into the Bank of England.

Thirdly.—That when the sum subscribed shall have amounted to about two thousand pounds, a pious, experienced, middle-aged medical man, a physician, be sent to Beyrout, accompanied by a chemist; there in co-operation with some intelligent native (such as

Asaad Kayat, the present English consul at Jaffa, who has so materially benefited his country), to purchase a promising piece of land in a healthy and elevated position an hour's ride from the town of Beyrout.

Fourthly.—To build there a hospital, and in the town a dispensary for out-door patients. The cost of this ground and buildings would not exceed one thousand pounds. Separate private rooms, attached to the hospital, would be very desirable for travellers, who needing medical aid or nursing, and being able to pay for the same, would prefer being thus lodged to going to an hotel. The physician attached to the institution might, when called in to attend opulent European or native families, might be permitted to charge a small fee, which could be regulated by the committee, and which fee, or half of it, might go towards the hospital expenses.

Fifthly.—If funds continued to permit, to build, in connection with this hospital (but in the town), school-rooms for boys and girls, where they might be thoroughly taught their own language, and in it go through a course of Christian instruction, learn needlework and household duties.

Sixthly.—I propose that the requisite medicines, surgical instruments, furniture, bedding, and materials for school use, be supplied by voluntary contributions, such Christian or charitable tradespeople as feel disposed to support such institutions contributing their mites thereto in lieu of paying money.

Seventhly.—It would be very desirable, when the hospital was constructed, if the physician there would take in as many Syrian pupils to educate as the funds permitted; to be sent, when deemed by him fit, to England to improve themselves at the hospitals here,

and to increase their Christian knowledge; afterwards to be employed in the hospitals or dispensaries, which, it is to be hoped, will soon, from so excellent a commencement, increase all over Syria; for it would be desirable that eventually all posts connected with these institutions should be occupied by intelligent natives, who could afford to be employed at much lower rates of salary, and who would exercise a greater influence over their fellow-townsmen if only from their superior knowledge of their mother tongue.

I have now endeavoured to shew that, with an outlay of two thousand pounds, very commodious institutions might be established and a large piece of ground be purchased at Beyrout, if a Society were formed for the Establishment of charitable institutions in Syria. Meanwhile, I have reckoned upon the charitable disposition of the class of annual subscribers, and in this Christian land, where money is so cheerfully granted for the promotion of good and alleviation of suffering, I may safely reckon on this bounty attaining about five hundred pounds per annum, not one fraction of which but may, with judicious arrangement, safely triple the amount in the course of a very few years.

I have as yet made no allusion as to the uses to which the land purchased in Beyrout might be applied besides the erection of a hospital upon it. This surplus land could, at a very trifling original outlay, be planted out with mulberry-shoots; and these mulberries, if properly managed, would, in the course of three years, be fit to rear the silk-worm. After the final erection of the proposed establishment at Beyrout, and when it had been working a year, I should recommend that the society, in lieu of permitting the surplus funds on hand to remain idle, should vote the same to the purchase

of some tract of land in the immediate neighbourhood of Damascus or Beyrout, and to have plantations in the fertile district of Antioch, where land and labour are excessively cheap. Thus, from an outlay of one thousand pounds in landed property would, if all planted with mulberries, yield, in the course of a few years, an annual revenue (if the silk were sold in the Syrian market), of about two hundred pounds per annum; if reeled for European purposes, nearly double that amount. And this revenue would go on steadily increasing as the trees became older and yielded more leaves for the nurture of a greater number of worms, and as, with the profits of the silk, additional grounds might be purchased and cultivated, I could safely guarantee that, were the society's efforts judiciously supported by efficient agents, in from fifteen to twenty years this and similar institutions would not only be enabled entirely to support themselves from the revenue of their estates, independent of any succour from the society, but they would even have surplus funds for the establishment of like minor institutions in the interior.

At the first outset the cultivation of the lands acquired in Beyrout might devolve upon the parents or destitute relatives of such of the poorer boys as were receiving a gratuitous education at the schools attached to the institutions, and the poorer class of girls educated at the schools, if permitted, might, during one month in the year, be occupied in reeling off the silk produced by the cocoons on the Institution's estates.

It is my idea, that the system of education should consist of two distinct schools or classes for both boys and girls; the upper or high school to be appropriated solely for the superior education of the sons and daughters of such wealthy and respectable natives as



have the means and inclination of advancing their children in after life, and on which children languages, drawing, music, various species of needlework, and other like accomplishments, would not be uselessly lavished; while, on the other hand, the lower school should strictly confine itself to orphans and children of the labouring and poorer classes, who might be instructed to read and write their own vernacular with ease and facility, at the same time that they were initiated into useful trades and professions, and the girls of this class taught plain needlework, and no useless accomplishments. As regards the diet and care of this latter class, strict attention should be paid to *cleanliness*, regularity, order, *truthfulness*, and other good habits; at the same time that their food and raiment should, though sufficient, be neither superabundant, nor consist of such articles as might induce them in after-years, when left to battle their way through the world, to have a hankering after dainties and luxuries wholly beyond the compass of their slender means.

But to ensure success to the proper working of such a Christian medical mission as is here contemplated, intemperate zeal or harsh bigotry must be carefully abstained from. I quite agree with Dr. Thompson, who, in a letter addressed to this country from Damascus, says, "I believe all who know the East, and particularly Syria, will freely admit that it is only through medical agency that a change in the religious views of the people can be effected; but even a medical man must work for years among them, and first acquire their confidence, and I believe I am not too sanguine that then, by cautious and judicious steps, he may and will do more than pure missionaries can expect to accomplish for a quarter of a century to come. It is at the

bedside of a sick person, where are always assembled all the friends of the patient, that a medical man can do the good work, and where he may do so with impunity, especially if there be a slight prospect of recovery. The most fanatical I have found raised no objection under these circumstances, even, strange to say, among the Moslems."

I may now quote the following lines from Mr. Cuthbert Young, in his "Notes of a Wayfarer," He says,—“ No means are more likely to smooth down prejudices and recommend true Christianity than the spirit of benevolence that emanates from it, and that breathes in this institution. Compulsory means for proselytising never have been, and never will be, effectual in the case of Mahomedans; but what can withstand self-denying kindness? And what may not happen when we know that free access is obtained by Christian physicians, even to the harems of Moslems! The same vices that are so destructive in China—infanticide and abortion—prevail here; and, I believe, the use of exciting stimulants, such as opium, is also general; but the wretched patients, when placed under the superintendence of a faithful Christian physician, though they may not be prepared to embrace Christianity, may yet drink in to some extent of the Christian spirit.”

The amount of good, and the favourable impression made on the people by medical missionaries, cannot be overrated. We need only refer to China. There is no more efficient way of rendering a people, or a country, lasting advantages, than through the agency of Christian and judicious medical men.

## CHAPTER XXII.

VISITS TO LADY ROLLE AND TO BATH AND CHELTENHAM.  
CONCLUSION.

THE patience of my readers is I fear exhausted, for I can hardly dare believe that I shall have succeeded in completely rousing their feelings in favour of my dear Syria, or that I have presented my country and its inhabitants to them in an interesting and absorbing light ; I crave their kind indulgence for my dulness.

Engaged in completing my manuscript preparatory to publication, I had devoted myself unweariedly to the task, and was about to correct the last few pages, when I was hindered by an invitation from my kind friend, Lady Rolle, to pay her a visit at Bickton in Devonshire, and there to recruit my health a little after my labour. Having accepted the invitation, I purpose to bring the history of my life and adventures to a close for the present with a short account of my visit to Bickton, also to Bath and Cheltenham, which afforded me great pleasure, and which I hope will interest my kind readers.

Lady Rolle had kindly invited me to visit her at Bickton, which invitation I was very glad to accept ; and I left London by an express train in full anticipation of much enjoyment. I had often heard the gardens at Bickton described as amongst the finest in this

county, but no description can do justice to its attractions and its surrounding scenery, which burst forth in all the majesty of a warm spring day, agreeably contrasting with the dark and murky atmosphere of London.

The rapidity of travelling by an express train really seems magical. If I were to write to my friends in the East and tell them I had travelled about two hundred miles within five hours, they would at once come to the conclusion that my head was turned like the unfortunate Druse Sheikh to whom I have alluded before. As soon as I had arrived at Exeter, I found a fly waiting for me, when I took my seat by the driver, preferring it to the closeness of an inside seat. I observed a great number of boys who indulged in various remarks concerning my beard, dress, etc., and frequently called after me, "Kossoo! Kossoo!" the meaning of which puzzled me not a little. I thought they meant the discoverer of the plant of that name so lately recommended for its medical properties, thinking they meant some allusion to my having studied medicine. In my perplexity I asked the driver for an explanation. "Why, maister, you sees they've never afore seed any foreign gentleman like yourself, but that ere one they calls Kossoo, so they 'sposes you be he." The subsequent conversation between the driver and myself turned upon Kossuth's merits. On my asking him if he had ever seen the Hungarian governor, "No, maister, I wishes I could send such publican foreigners into the sea instead of having them in our country." I told him that this is not the way in which we treat foreigners in our country, he replied, "You be come from the Holy Land which be'ant our country."

After a beautiful drive we arrived at the park-gates, where I was welcomed by the presence of a herd of beautiful deer, who seemingly were as inquisitive as human beings, they would not, however, permit me to approach them, but bounded gracefully away, thinking no doubt that so strange a looking being as myself should be first acknowledged and welcomed by their fair owner ere they would deign to become familiar with me. On arriving within sight of the mansion, I was struck with its fine appearance and noble proportions, and scarcely believed that any private individual could be the possessor of such a magnificent residence, which resembled more a royal palace than a country-seat of an English nobleman. I charged the driver with bringing me to a wrong place, but he resolutely persisted in affirming that this was the seat of Lady Rolle. On my arrival, a great many houris simultaneously appeared at the window, with what seemed to me to be wands; but soon the truth flashed upon me, and I discovered that the houris which my imagination had conjured up, were no other than Lady Rolle and her fair guests, who were amusing themselves with a game of billiards. The noble mistress of the mansion immediately introduced me to a large assemblage of wit, beauty, and fashion.

It would be difficult to describe the loveliness and magnificence both of the grounds and house, as well as the softness and grandeur of the charming country by which they are surrounded. But to delineate the charms and attractions in which nature here delights to invest herself at the cheering and smiling season of spring, and to describe the stately forms of the gigantic oaks, which have so long bid defiance to the



destroying hand of time, would be an undertaking which would fully baffle the descriptive powers of the best of my country's poets. Never, in short, have I seen anything to rival this lovely human paradise, though I have had the pleasure of travelling through many English counties. I must leave my kind and indulgent reader to draw largely on his imaginative powers, and in thought translate himself to some fairy land, where nature's beauties revel and disport in all their glory, and exhibit to the view of the entranced beholders all that is grand, beautiful, and ennobling. At Bicton time sped rapidly on, as time always will speed when spent in such charming and agreeable society. Our usual daily routine was prayers at half-past eight A.M., at which all the guests and servants attended, and her ladyship read the prayers herself. What an example thought I to thousands of the aristocracy of Europe! After prayers we repaired to the breakfast parlour where a sumptuous repast was always provided. After breakfast, the company separated into different parties—some for a drive, some for a walk, whilst others went shooting or fishing. At one all usually re-assembled and partook of an excellent lunch, afterwards there were billiards, bagatelle, and books; in short, each did as he thought fit. We dined, and after that there was abundance of amusement; in the evening the ladies delighted us by playing and singing.

Towards the close of my visit, I may inform the reader that my own stock of amusements were varied (I am happy to say that it was towards the end of my stay), by the discovery that two of her ladyship's guests, Mr. P— and Mr. W—, were skilful with their pencils, and insisted upon handing me down to posterity

in their sketch-books, so that I was suddenly assailed right and left (I think it must have been a concerted plan between them for their mutual convenience), which kept me pretty quiet in attendance to be sure—to their ease and my dis-ease. Mr. W—— not content with conferring on me the above advantage, insists on the further distinction of hanging me up at the exhibition—a sentence which I really believe he will carry into execution.

The time thus passed pleasantly away, and the recollection of these delightful hours will always be vividly engraven on my mind. Amongst the performers on the piano was one who, *par excellence*, was divine: this was a Miss W——. We often had a round game invented by Mr. P——. Something similar to “My Lady’s Toilet,” only more refined.

Lady Rolle kindly introduced me, during my residence at her abode, to a Mrs. P—— of Exeter, with whom I had a long conversation respecting the Greek church and the state of female education in Syria. I have heard that her daughters often visit the poor cottagers with a view to improve and ameliorate their condition, a custom I am happy to find becoming very prevalent among the upper classes in England during the last few years. I wish some philanthropic young ladies would follow their good example and make a step still further by setting out on a crusade against the ignorance of their sex in Syria.

On the grounds attached to the mansion my hostess has built a very beautiful tower filled with valuable and rare samples of china, it resembles an Indian pagoda. This amiable lady has also built a very fine church in memory of her husband, and also a mausoleum. But what surprised me still more was to find

a cottage on her grounds which was paved entirely with sheep's knucklebones—a novel spectacle to me, and very ingenious and curious.

Whilst at Bicton I heard a very amusing anecdote about an Eastern princess, who it appears had come there on a visit from London, and was much noticed by the nobility. This lady was very fond of vegetables and fruit, and in order the more freely to gratify her appetite, she used to rise early and go into the garden, and amongst other delicacies, she never spared the young onions, of which she was exceedingly fond. The gardener could not account for the depredations committed on his *potager* till accident led him to discover the mystery. One day he locked the gate before the princess returned from her morning walk, and consequently she remained there some considerable time, and had to breakfast and dine off her favourite vegetables. At length, after a long search, the gardener heard her crying out, and accordingly released her.

One day during this agreeable visit was devoted to a drive to Exeter to see the cathedral, gaol, and hospital, with which I was much interested. I must here bestow a passing note of admiration on her ladyship's "turn-out," which conveyed us to the town; suffice it to say that it was appointed in the best English style, and with four fine horses of imposing stature, with their gay silver trappings and postillions, made an excellent *coup d'œil*. With the architecture of the cathedral I was particularly struck, resembling that of an old church in Syria. I much admired the small paintings in fresco underneath the organ, which I was told had only recently been discovered, and these were very similar to those in our churches throughout my country, and which may be seen at the present day. After having

inspected the cathedral, I visited the gaol, which pleased me from being kept so scrupulously clean; and I highly approved of the regulations and rules which were laid down and enforced. But one circumstance in particular pained me very much, that was to find a child only eight years of age imprisoned for arson. I was told that he was much happier in gaol than at home. Before leaving I visited the female department, which was equally clean and well arranged, and all the women were usefully occupied. Upon enquiring of the governor of the gaol whether the female prisoners gave him much trouble, his answer was, "I would rather have to do with a dozen men than one woman." This speech rather startled me, and as it was time to return to Bicton I left Exeter, having been highly gratified and pleased with my visit. During my stay in the neighbourhood, as we proceeded through the village, many and very amusing conjectures were made concerning my country and station. By some I was considered no less a personage than a Persian prince; others deemed me a Turkish Pacha, whilst many even exalted me so high as to be somewhat of more importance—an Indian Rajah. Soon after I bade adieu to Bicton, but not without deep regret and sorrow at leaving our amiable and hospitable friend and her assembled guests.

From Bicton I proceeded to Bath. It was about mid-day when I started; the weather was lovely, and forcibly brought to my mind the contrast between the murky and ungenial atmosphere which pervaded London when I left it, and the bright clear air of this favoured portion of England. Could my readers, who spend so much of their time in the metropolis, have felt as I did on this morning, when the sweet breeze, wafting the

odours of the fresh-turned earth, seemed to breathe health upon the cheek, and purity and peace into the heart, they could never again declare that the country possessed no charms. Contemplate but the rising of day's bright luminary, which in the west of England is especially glorious, making its appearance as it does from behind lofty and undulating lines of hills, overlooking the loveliest of valleys, which must in spring present more the appearance of a Syrian glen than anything I have hitherto seen. The verdant moss, the delicate white violet, and the modest primrose, which hid their loveliness beneath a variety of trees, and amongst them the first that puts forth its blossoms is the sallow, whose yellow downy buds emit a honeyed odour, all combine to constitute this beautiful part of England a very Garden of Eden in which an humble mind might dwell for ever.

The impression produced on my mind by these scenes, was very similar to that which so painfully affects the Swiss when in a foreign country he is reminded of his wild and mountainous home. I felt all the sensations of the indescribable "*mal de pays*."

But I must proceed on my journey. I entered the railway carriage, and quick as lightning sped from all those who had shewn me so much kindness and attention, and to whom I shall often travel back in thought to dwell with grateful satisfaction and delight on this happy period of my life. Should any of my readers, who have not yet visited Bath, have occasion hereafter to do so, they will not fail, as I was, to be struck with the picturesque appearance which meets the eye just before arriving at this beautiful city; the numerous pretty meadows—the spires of churches rising here and there to remind the beholder that he is in a Christian



country — richly cultivated pleasure grounds surrounding neat villas — the village inn and its busy scene — carriages, omnibuses, and vehicles of every description travelling in all directions, giving to this fair city of the west, a miniature resemblance to the mighty metropolis in a far more agreeable sense.

But now the engine begins to slacken its pace; the shrill whistle sounds, and the heavy train, though seeming to grow tired yet reluctant to rest, arrives at the terminus. All now is hurry and bustle, friends, parents, assistants, are on the platform eager to welcome or render their aid, as the case may be, yet provokingly kept back by the railings which are pertinaciously kept for a while closed. At last all are free, and Bath, that elegant city, with its beautiful surrounding hills, and dazzling white houses, and decorated architectural public buildings, now bursts upon the view; the smoke curling upwards towards the clear atmosphere, dispersing ere it reaches the azure sky. The mildness of the climate surprised me, and particularly the warm mineral springs. There is an idea prevalent in Syria that England being an island, there are no springs, that all the streams are brackish, and that the inhabitants are supplied with drinking water from the clouds. On my first arrival in this country, seeing wine so plentiful and water so scarce at meals, I was inclined to believe that the supposition was a true one.

Arriving at Bath, I immediately proceeded to the house of my valued and excellent friend, Sir Claude Wade, whose services in India will deservedly hand his name down to future generations as a distinguished character in the annals of European history. The following day after my arrival was devoted to making a tour of the city, in the course of which I saw the Royal

Crescent, one of the finest piles of architecture I ever beheld, commanding quite a panoramic view of the surrounding country; I also walked through the Victoria Park, and examined the column erected in commemoration of the Queen's visit to Bath in 1839. The inhabitants express their regret that their sovereign has not since favoured their fine city with her beloved presence. The rides and promenades in and about the city are very pleasant and delightful, reminding one so much of the *agrément* of a foreign town, that I am surprised it should not be more generally visited by the English fashionables instead of going abroad to spend their money.

I found that the society here is on a very pleasant footing, and their genuine hospitality and kindness to me I shall remember with gratitude. Here, as well as elsewhere, there exists a great diversity of religious opinion. At one place I was asked whether I attended the High or Low Church, and imagining, at first, that they alluded to an upper or a lower part of the building, I replied that I preferred the body of the church, as I did not like mounting stairs. My answer afforded much amusement, but on discovering what was really intended by the question, I was too much occupied with thinking about the divisions amongst professing Christians to heed the smiles which I had caused.

On Sunday I attended the Octagon Chapel, to hear a celebrated young preacher, and was handed by the pew-opener into a seat where there was a charming lady, who shewed me every attention, and even gave me her own book with the different parts of the service marked. I was most sensible of her civility, and thanked her for her kindness, which she politely but distantly acknowledged. The next day, I went with my friends to Mrs. F—'s soirée, in the Circus, where, to my sur-

prise and pleasure, I again met this houri, when we soon got into conversation. She told me how astonished she was when she heard a "Turk" read and sing, etc.; she asked me many questions regarding my opinion of England and English customs, etc., and particularly what were my first impressions on hearing the vocal music of this country; I candidly said, that it seemed to me like the howlings of my own countrymen over the bodies of departed friends; I added, however, that in my case the old proverb "use is second nature," had proved true, for now that I had become accustomed to it, the vocal as well as instrumental music of this country possessed great charms for me. My fair questioner was highly amused at my description of "first impressions" on this subject, from which we diverged into other matters of conversation, and I finally left my kind entertainer's house with an impression of her hospitality, and of the fair community of Bath, more agreeable than were my first impressions of English music, and certainly not so likely to be changed. I desire also publicly to thank the inhabitants of Bath generally, as well as the municipal authorities of the city for the practical kindness I experienced from them during my visit.

As I am on the subject of Bath, I may as well mention my last visit to that gay and delightful city, in the course of which a grand ball was given by the bachelors to their friends; I was kindly invited to it by Mr. Nugent, whose zeal and activity in promoting the harmless gaieties of the place, are the theme of praise with every one, and of whose polite attention to strangers I cannot speak too highly. Nothing that money and taste could effect was spared to make the ball one of the most brilliant and magnificent enter-

tainments that I have witnessed in this country. The Rooms were celebrated, I hear, in former times as the scene where many a fair houri made her *début* in the fashionable world, and were decorated in a style of elegance which reflected the greatest credit on the artists. I can only say, that whatever may have been their by-gone attractions, it is impossible that the display of bright eyes and graceful forms could ever have surpassed what I gazed upon that night. To attempt to describe this fairy scene would require the pen of a poet, that I might give adequate expression to my admiration of the beauty by which I was surrounded. I will quote, however, a passage from an Eastern author, which I think apropos to the occasion : "Their beauty is perfection, they are loveliness itself; their elegant shapes glance like javelins by moonlight; their tresses float down their backs like the tendrils of the grape; they are slayers and piercers with their arrows and their darts; archers and strikers, the enchantresses of the *minds* and *hearts* of men."

While at Bath I also had the pleasure of attending another splendid ball given at the Guildhall by the Lady Mayoress, at which the *élite* of society here were present. The amiable hostess and her lord received their guests with great kindness and affability, evincing a desire to please, which completely succeeded, for every one seemed to enjoy the dancing exceedingly, as well as the sumptuous supper. The Lady Mayoress' health was proposed in a suitable manner by the Marquis of Thomond, which was drank with all the honours in sparkling champagne. During the evening, I was observing a Masonic symbol suspended over the insignia of the Mayor's office, which led a gentleman, who was standing by, to recognise me as a brother

mason. He at once introduced me to several of the brethren, and a few days afterwards I was invited by "the Lodge of Honour," at Bath, to meet the Mayor at dinner, where we had "the feast of reason and the flow of soul."

I shall always retain a lively recollection of the pleasure which they afforded me, and the kindness I experienced. Whilst walking out one day I encountered my friend, Dr. Thompson, whom I had known in Syria, and who hailed me in Arabic, in the words of an old Eastern proverb, viz., *that though mountains never meet the sons of Eve will*. Dr. Thompson, at my request, gave two lectures, one at Cheltenham and one at Bath, which I think worthy of being inserted,\* and I beg now to thank him for the interest he takes in the affairs of my country.

\* EUPHRATES AND THE EAST.—On Saturday last, a lecture, announced under the above title, was delivered at the Assembly Rooms in this city, by Dr. J. B. Thompson, a gentleman who has just returned from a medical mission in Turkey. Capt. Saumarez, R.N., presided, and a very numerous audience of ladies and gentlemen attended on the occasion. The lecture was so desultory in its course, that it will not admit of analysis; nevertheless, it was exceedingly interesting, and formed an important addition to our information respecting a country which is the cradle of the world. Dr. Thompson, it appears, was sent to Asiatic Turkey on a medical mission by an association of English gentlemen, amongst whom was the Earl of Ellesmere and having opened a free hospital at Damascus, and acquired the Arabic language, he enjoyed rare facilities for obtaining a knowledge of the manners, feelings, and circumstances of the population. There is not only more toleration for Christians in Turkey, but less corruption and injustice than under the powers which seek to dismember it. He described the Turkish rulers as sensible men, ever ready to carry on any improvements suggested to them. The missionaries would effect far more if, instead of teaching doctrines to adults, they educated the



## VISIT TO CHELTENHAM.

From Bath I went to the above place, and during my stay I took up my quarters at the Plough Hotel, where I was most comfortable, and received every attention from the proprietor.

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females prior to their seclusion in the harems. There was no impediment to the establishment of female schools; and, therefore, if these secondary means were adopted, the condition of the young might be raised, the prejudices of the parents might be abated, and a foundation might be laid for the civilisation of the East. The principal feature of the lecture, however, was the description of a new route to India. Instead of passengers proceeding by Alexandria, Cairo, across the sandy Egyptian Desert, and through the Red Sea, it was suggested that they should land at the mouth of the river Orontes, near Antioch, in Syria, and pass through a rich and beautiful country to Belis. There, embarking on the river Euphrates, they would descend through the land of Paradise to Bussora on the Persian Gulf, and from thence proceed straight to Bombay or Calcutta. The advantages of this new route were healthiness and rapidity. The journey to India by Suez occupied twenty-eight days, and entailed much suffering in crossing the Desert, and in traversing the unhealthy Red Sea. The transit from Antioch to Belis would occupy two days by railway through a country so rich and fertile that it would become peopled if communication were opened up. The entire journey to India would be shortened seven days, the route being not only better but shorter by at least 300 miles. The saving of time would be still greater if a railway were formed along the bank of the Euphrates from Belis to Bussora. Dr. Thompson addressed himself to the objections which had been made to the route by the Euphrates. It had been said, that Col. Chesney's exploring expedition failed; but this was incorrect. Col. Chesney's difficulties arose partly from his having fixed upon Barick, higher up than Belis, as his terminus, and partly from the want of native pilots. The river is

I should be unmindful, and thankless indeed were I to forget to express my grateful thanks to friends generally for the kind reception given me, and for the

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subject to squalls, the signs of which are familiar to those who live on its banks; but Col. Chesney employed none of the navigators, and one of his steamers having been upset, the river in consequence got a bad name. It had been said, too, that the Bedouin Arabs are ill-disposed towards the navigation of the Euphrates. This Dr. Thompson denied on his own knowledge, having visited all the chiefs along the banks, and he declared, contrary to the general opinion, that the Bedouins are a benevolent, generous, noble-hearted race. It might be true, he observed, that during the progress of Col. Chesney's expedition, the Bedouins were prejudiced against the navigation of the river; but the fact was, there were powers which thought they had an interest in misrepresenting the intentions of the English in the East. This feeling had, however, been dissipated by more correct knowledge. Dr. Thompson added, that he had submitted the plan of the Euphrates route to the Turkish Sultan, who immediately perceived its advantages over the old route through Egypt, and would strongly support it. One feature of the plan, he also stated, would be the establishment of a school for children at Antioch, the climate of which is delightful; and and while officers in India might come there on furlough, without losing certain advantages, as they would still be within the confines of Asia, their friends in Europe would find it an easy and delightful trip to visit them at that place. Dr. Thompson pointed out other and more general advantages which would arise from the adoption of the new route, as regards trade and civilisation.

On the conclusion of the lecture, Habeeb Risk Allah Effendi, a Syrian, who is at present sojourning in this city, presented himself to the meeting, and addressed it in a few sentences expressive of his desire that the Euphrates route might be adopted, as it would be the means of civilising his native country. The Syrian women, he said, are entirely uneducated, and this is one of the principal causes of the ignorance which pervades the great mass of the people. He gracefully thanked the audience for their attendance, regarding it as a manifesta-

interest evinced on behalf of my beloved country, and I shall ever retain a lively remembrance of the Rev. J. Brown, Incumbent of Trinity Church. Wherever he is known, the deepest respect and regard are evinced towards him and his family. Oh, would that poor Syria were blessed with a few such philanthropic men, with hearts and minds so capable of diffusing wisdom and knowledge wherever they go.

I shall never forget the brief address delivered by this kind-hearted man, at a lecture given by Dr. Thompson, on behalf of female education in the East. In a few words he expressed all the wants of my country, which went home to my heart. I trust that the interest shewn by all on this exciting occasion may be the means of benefitting neglected Syria, and of promoting the interest of her benighted children, as regards educational institutions. I must also here record my sincere gratitude to the Rev. C. H. Bromby, M.A., the principal of the Normal Training College. How well, and how admirably this noble school is managed. How suitable it would be to the children of Syria!

The few sentences I addressed to the meeting at Cheltenham, were expressive of my hope that they would enable me to send over for a few young Syrians of both sexes to participate in the benefits of their college; and that it was my firm conviction the period was not far off when this institution would embrace a

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tion of warm interest felt in the progress of the East. A vote of thanks having been given to Dr. Thompson, on the motion of Sir Claude Wade, the audience separated, and, we may fairly add, that, though the manner of the lecturer was clearly unpremeditated, his matter gave considerable satisfaction to a large, intelligent, and influential audience.—*Extract from the Bath Chronicle.*

more extensive field of usefulness, and become the means of introducing Gospel truth and its accompanying blessings to my much loved Lebanon. Then shall the Cedar once again and for ever flourish in its native soil, spreading its luxuriant branches to shield the Thistle from all rude assaults—which may then grope even in its own humble way to thrive, and flourish and raise its crowned head.\* Visitors to Cheltenham cannot but feel deeply indebted to Lord Northwick, for his liberality in admitting them to his interesting and unique collection of paintings. I was much gratified at the privilege thus afforded me, and it is due to his Lordship to say that the arrangement of the valuable paintings is exceedingly good. Both myself

\* In the course of my address, I alluded to the case of a young Syrian lad, now in Paris, under Roman Catholic tuition, whose friends would like him to be removed from this influence and educated in England. I appealed to the ladies present, if they would not feel disposed to give back to Syria somewhat of their present fulness—some of that light which they had obtained through those Scriptures known in my land when heathen darkness reigned in this. I suggested, that if each lady present in that large assembly would but subscribe one shilling towards this Christian attempt, and keep up, *for a time*, the interest in such a subscription, by naming it to all their friends, or themselves making it yearly, I could at once have my *protégé* brought over and educated at this Normal College above alluded to as so admirably conducted. Many instantly responded to my appeal, and volunteered their support, so that I have already taken measures towards having this lad brought over, and placed in this college, under the patronage of the Rev. J. Brown, to whom I am permitted to refer for further information all who may feel benevolently disposed to assist in this great national amelioration of a once glorious land, now, alas! sunk in darkness and ignorance. All inquiries addressed to myself, No. 18, Cambridge Square, Hyde Park, will also meet with prompt and grateful attention.

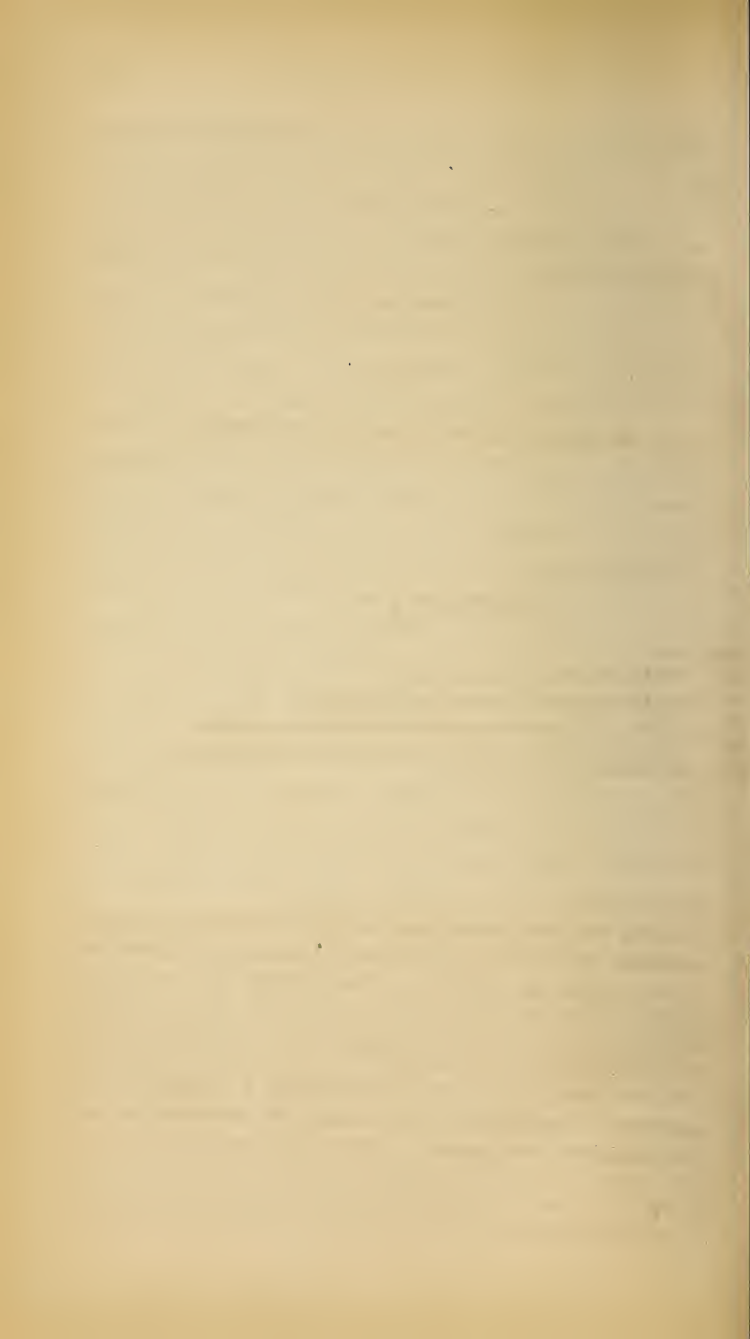


and a friend, who accompanied me, were much surprised at our entrance to the extent and magnificence of the apartments, especially the modern room called the *Pantheon*; we much admired the painting of the Earl of Surrey, by Titian, and were struck with its Oriental caste of features and complexion, which called to memory some one with whom we were mutually acquainted in Syria. Our attention was next directed to the portrait of Mahomet II., and if I may judge from the engravings of this Sultan, which I have seen in the houses of some of the nobility of Turkey (before the strict prohibition of the Koran on this head), this picture is an admirable likeness of him. We are told that it was expressly painted by the artist in deference to the wishes of the Venetians, who sent Bellini to Constantinople in the year 1458 for this purpose.

The Flight into Egypt is another fine specimen of painting, and though of modern date delineates Oriental travelling; the face of the Virgin is exquisitely beautiful, and has a heavenly expression; this figure forcibly brought before me the Countess of K—, whom I had met on the day preceding my visit to this place. I would gladly have spent days instead of hours in this delightful residence, ornamented with such valuable and beautiful specimens of the fine arts; those only who come from distant lands, can fully appreciate the luxuries of all kinds which meet the eye of the spectator when in Western Europe, and especially in Great Britain. The magnificence which I encounter on all sides makes a sadness steal over me, and I cannot but lament for the barrenness of my native land, which once teemed with works, both of art and science, “How are the mighty fallen!” But hope shall shine in the Eastern skies, and the bright morning star arise again.



In bringing these pages to a close, permit me to express a hope that they may not prove wholly without interest to those who may peruse them. My chief incentive for appearing before the public, has been from an humble desire to advocate the cause of Syria, and the patriotic will doubtless join in my prayer, that my efforts may not prove abortive. If, therefore, either directly or otherwise, I shall be the means of rousing the sympathetic energies of right thinking people, on behalf of my native land, I shall feel fully recompensed for all the time I have bestowed on this little volume. However great have been the exertions which, (as not professing authorship), it may have given me, yet the recalling past scenes and circumstances for the work has left a relish and a fragrance on my mind, and a remembrance which is sweet. May then those seeds of charity which have so often sprung up, blossomed, and yielded fruit for me, now do so likewise (and more also) for my country. I cannot take leave of my readers without once more expressing my heartfelt gratitude towards the people of this country. From all whom I have ever met, I have received that welcome and reception for which the English are justly proverbial. Even the nobles of these mighty realms have deigned to honour me, by evincing an interest in the subject next to my heart. May that Omnipotent Power to whose authority they also bend, long preserve these great and true-hearted men, and may this kingdom never cease to be the ark, the earthly resting-place of all true believers, where, as from a vast store-house for provisions, mental or bodily, all nations under the sun seek and find assistance.



## ERRATA.

*Page. Line.*

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|-----|---|
| 96  | 22 <i>for</i> Dog River, <i>read</i> Rase Beyrout                         |
| —   | 32 <i>for</i> accompanied by, <i>read</i> accompanying an                 |
| 106 | 16 etc., <i>for</i> General Loustaneau, <i>read</i> General Loustannan    |
| 149 | 26 <i>for</i> General Duncan Macleod, <i>read</i> the Earl of Shaftesbury |
| 261 | 23 <i>for</i> Bakary, <i>read</i> Baackry                                 |



## APPENDIX.

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### NOTES ON THE GEOLOGY OF SYRIA,

*(Kindly communicated to me by my friend, Professor Edward Forbes.)*

MY DEAR SIR,—It is much to be desired that a careful geological exploration of your interesting country should be undertaken by an able investigator. All that we know of the structure of Syria is fragmentary, and in great part unsatisfactory. Sufficient, however, is known, to indicate the scientific importance of the region, and to hold out a promise of a rich harvest for the practical geologist who may undertake its description. The collection of fossils which I have myself seen, from the district around Lebanon, suggested many enquiries that have not yet been answered, especially respecting the relations of the jurassic and cretaceous rocks of that famous region. The following scanty notices of what is known about Syrian formations and their fossils, may serve to excite curiosity and to direct the traveller to fresh observations.

In the year 1833, a valuable memoir by M. Botta, Jun., was published by the Geological Society of France. It is entitled "Observations sur le Liban et l'Antiliban." He represents Mount Lebanon as composed of rocks belonging to the lower cretaceous series, resting upon green sands, and these in their turn reposing upon jurassic strata. He states, that in the chain of the Lebanon there are three distinct formations. The uppermost is a limestone, very variable in character, both of appearance and hardness, and alternating with calcareous marls. The lower division of this formation is distinguished by the presence of beds and nodules of flint. Fossil sea-urchins occur in its middle, and fishes in its lower part. A second formation



of variable thickness is sandy, very ferruginous, abounding in iron ores and lignites, and passing above into a calcareous rock. The lowest formation is constituted of numerous beds of cavernous limestone. Besides these older rocks, M. Botta remarks upon the presence all along the coast from Beyrout to Tripoli, of conglomerates or sandstones, quite unconformable to the calcareous rocks of the coast.

M. Botta takes particular notice of those localities in which remarkable fossils occur. The first is at the bottom of the basin in which Antoura is built. The stratum is confused marl, abounding in specimens of sea-urchins. These species are remarkable for their size and shape. He considers this bed as belonging to the jurassic series. Corals are also found in it.

The second locality is near the convent of Bikeurby; where a stratum occurs containing numerous univalve shells of the genus *Nerinea*, which being harder than the rock containing them, stand up on its weathered surface.

The third locality is at Sach el Aalma, where at about 300 feet above the level of the sea occurs an impure limestone, often soft. In it fossil fishes are found in plenty. They are irregularly disposed in the rock.

The fossil fishes of Mount Lebanon have been the subject of frequent investigations, although the true geological position of the beds whence they are derived, has not yet been made out with certainty. Two memoirs have especially been devoted to descriptions of them, the one by M. Heckel (1843), and the other by Professor Pictet, of Geneva (1850). Professor Agassiz, also has written upon some of the Lebanon fishes, and Sir Philip Grey Egerton has described a very remarkable fossil, viz., the *Cyclobatis Oligodactylus*, brought from Syria by Captain Graves, R.N., who kindly committed it to my care in 1845. Altogether no fewer than thirty-four fossil fishes from Mount Lebanon are now known and described. As the works in which the accounts are contained are not likely to pass into the hands of travellers, it may be useful to give a list of some of the principal of these very interesting and beautiful fossils.

Of the family of perched fishes there occurs a species of *Beryx*, a genus of which certain fossil forms are found in the chalk, and a few living species in the Indian seas. The *Beryx Vexillifer* is found in the hard limestones of Hakel.

Of the family of sparoid fishes, one or two species occur in

the soft limestones of Sach el Aalma. The *Pagellus Libanicus* is an example.

Of the family of Chromidæ, three species of *Pycnosterinx* occur in the soft limestones of Sach el Aalma, viz., *P. discoides*, *P. Heckelii*, and *P. Russegerii*.

Of the Squamipennes, a *Platax* occurs in the hard limestones of Hakel.

Of the Cataphracti, a new genus called *Petalopteryx* has been established by Pictet for a fish from Sach el Aalma. Of the Sphyrenoid fishes, a *Mesogaster* occurs at the same locality. To the Halecoid fishes a great number of those of Lebanon belong; among them are the following:—

*Osmeroides Megapterus*, Sach el Aalma.

*Eurypholis* (new genus of Pictet) *sulcidens*, from Hakel.

*Eurypholis Boisseri*, from the same locality.

*Eurypholis longiden*, from Sach el Aalma.

*Spaniodon* (new genus of Pictet) *Blondelii*, from Sach el Aalma.

*Spaniodon elongatus*, Sach el Aalma.

*Clupea lata*, Sach el Aalma.

*Clupea macropthalma*, Hakel.

*Clupea sardinoides*, Hakel.

*Clupea laticauda*, Hakel.

*Clupea minima*, Sach el Aalma.

*Clupea brevissima*, Hakel. This fish originally described by M. de Blainville, appears to be very common in its locality.

Of the Esocidæ, there is the fish called *Rhinellus furcatus*, which occurs at Sach el Aalma.

Of the Sclerodermi, several species of *Dircetis* occur at Sach el Aalma. A curious and anomalous fish, called *Coccodus armatus*, is found at Hakel.

Of Cartilaginous fishes, a *Spinax* is found at Sach el Aalma.

The curious *Cyclobatis oligodactylus* of Egerton belongs to the same division.

In the north of Syria, M. C. Gaillardot has observed several distinct stages of rocks belonging to the great Nummulitic formation, and therefore, according to the received geological classification, members of the Eocene group of Tertiaries. The newest of these beds are stated to consist of compact white or grey limestones containing fossil corals, sea-urchins, and oysters. Under these is a white chalky limestone, alternating with green

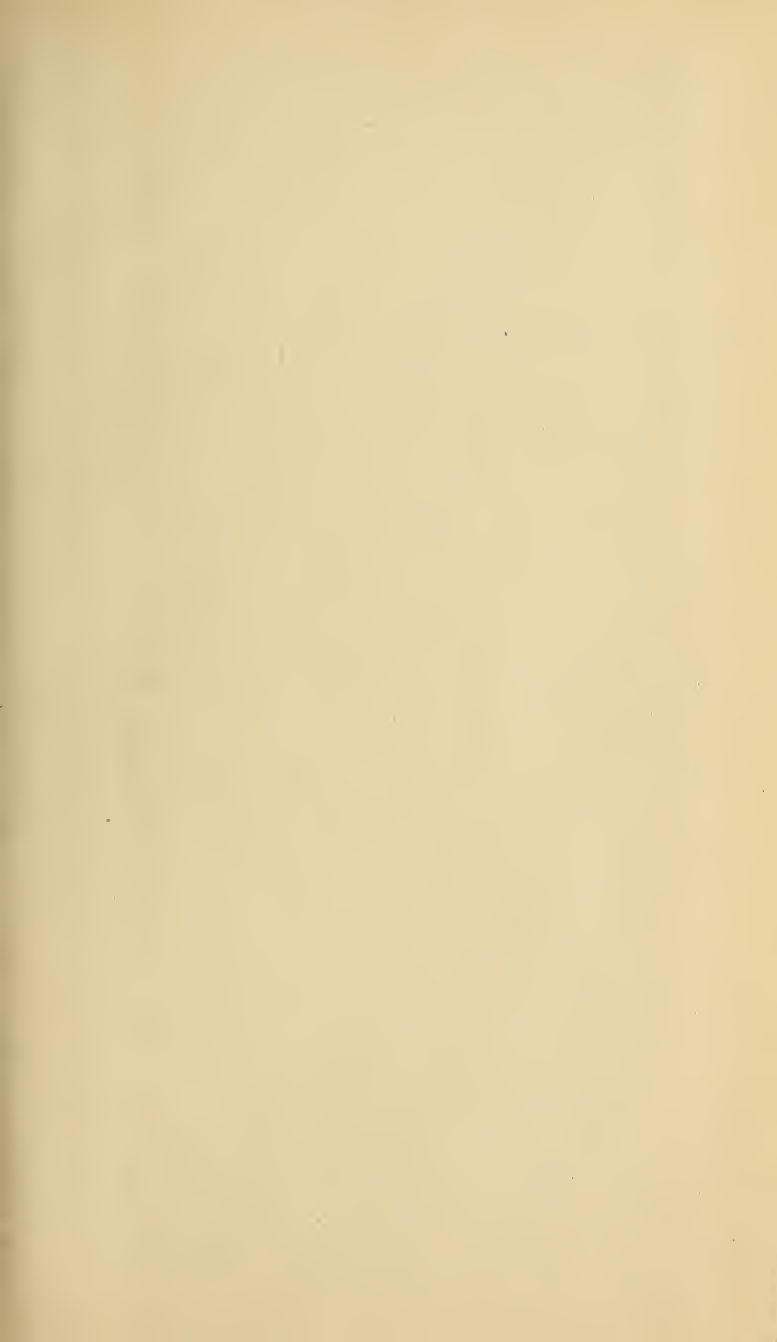
and grey soft marls and other limestones, almost entirely made up, according to Vicomte D'Archiac, of the *Nummulina intermedia*. In the white limestones of Ainzarka are found *Nummulina Raymondi*, *N. lævigata*, and *Alveolina subpyrenacia*. M. Gaillardot would distinguish the entire group of strata constituting the highest mountains of Syria by the name of the Libanian System. He appears, however, to have confounded strata of very different ages, tertiary rocks with cretaceous and jurassic. In the true Lebanon region the nummulitic beds seem to be altogether wanting. It is possible that they may be present in the Antioch district, but this has not been clearly made out as yet. M. Russegger has shewn, contrary to the views of M. Gaillardot, that the region around Jerusalem is mainly of oolitic age, with occasional remains of cretaceous strata outlying here and there.

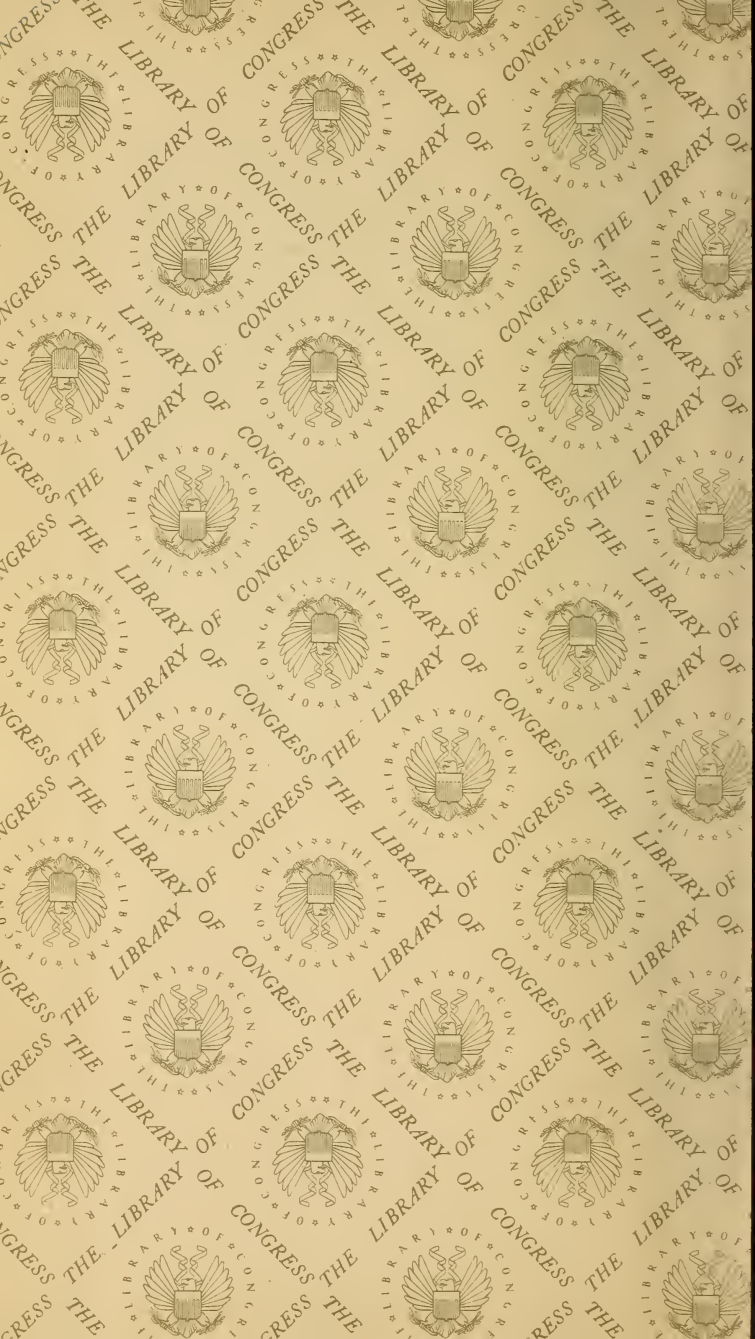
During the Armenian expedition to the shores of the Dead Sea, considerable collections of Syrian fossils appear to have been amassed. These have been described by Mr. Conrad, and are figured in the report very recently published by Mr. Lynch. The cretaceous beds of Syria are therein referred in part, at least, to the age of the white chalk of Europe. The Jurassic fossils are, for the most part, in the condition of casts. Species of *Nerinea* were noticed, and among European forms, the *Ostrea scapha* of Roemer, and the *Ostrea virgata* of Goldfuss. A very remarkable fossil is the *Ammonites Syriacus*, from the Lebanon region; it is a species apparently of the genus *Ceratites*, a group of cephalopods usually regarded as characteristic of strata of Triassic age, but in this instance possibly represented among cretaceous beds.





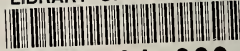








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